

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND
Report No. 1

REPORT AND PROPOSALS FOR THE
West Midlands Special Review Area

Presented to the Minister of Housing and Local Government
May, 1961



LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
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To the Rt. Hon. Henry Brooke, M.P.,
Minister of Housing and Local Government.

1. We, the Local Government Commission for England, were appointed in October 1958 under the Local Government Act, 1958. Under Section 17 of the Act we are charged with the duty of reviewing the organisation of local government in England (outside the Metropolitan area) and of making proposals for such changes as appear to us desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government.
2. We began our work at the beginning of 1959 with reviews of the East and West Midlands and now submit our report and final proposals for the West Midlands Special Review Area, which is one of the five areas of special review defined for us in the Third Schedule to the Act of 1958.
3. We have carried out our review in accordance with the Act and the Regulations made under it—the Local Government Commission Regulations 1958, S.I. 1958 No. 2115. Section 18 of the Act empowers us to propose alteration of the area of an administrative county or county borough, the constitution of a new county or county borough, the abolition of a county or county borough and the conversion of a county borough into a non-county borough. In a special review area we are further empowered to consider the creation of a continuous county, that is to say a county within which there are no county boroughs, and to propose a redistribution of functions as between the county council and the county district councils in the new county.
4. These provisions accord with the White Paper on Areas and Status of Local Authorities in England and Wales (Cmd.9831) in assuming the retention of the broad existing structure of local government. Our task is to make proposals for bringing this structure into line with modern needs and it is outside our powers to propose a completely new structure (as has been urged upon us by some people) either on a regional basis or by joining town and country in new all-purpose authorities.
5. We have been much concerned with the claims and views of local authorities, but we have had it in mind above all that it is the people in each area who require effective and convenient local government. We believe that if our recommendations are adopted, local government in the review area will be strengthened to fulfil its obligations in the years ahead, without losing its essentially local character.
6. In presenting this first report to you we wish to express our thanks to all those who took time and trouble to give us information and advice, both orally and in writing. We also acknowledge the devoted help of the Commission's staff, and in particular we wish to mention the work of Mr. J. D. Jones who was

our Secretary from our appointment until 8th March of this year when he left us to return to duty in your Department, that is throughout virtually the whole period of the review and the preparation of our proposals and report for this area. We are deeply indebted to him for the diligence and clear thinking he brought to his task.

HENRY D. HANCOCK (*Chairman*)

MICHAEL E. ROWE (*Deputy Chairman*)

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- B. Pattern of Development.
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Definitive Maps at a scale of 1/25,000, or about 2½" to one mile, separately published by

*Her Majesty's Stationery Office (Map No. 1, price 2s. 0d. net each part;
Maps Nos. 2-11, price 2s. 0d. each net)*

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Chapter 1

Character of the Area

1. The West Midlands Special Review Area is one of those great urban masses which have become known as "conurbations"—a continuous built-up area formed by the growing together of many once separate towns and districts. For local government purposes it is divided between county boroughs, where one local authority is responsible for providing all the local services (the one-tier system), and county districts, which may be boroughs or urban districts, where some of the services are provided by the district council and the rest by the county council (the two-tier system). The haphazard mingling together in one continuous urban area of authorities with different powers and different capacities produces a very complex pattern of services with the possibility of much overlapping and confusion. The Act and the regulations under which we work⁽¹⁾ have recognised that the problems of a conurbation may call for more drastic reorganisation of the local government structure than is needed in the rest of the country. We therefore have to look not only at county and county borough boundaries, but also at district boundaries and the whole relationship of the districts to the county boroughs.
2. In 1960 the special review area had an estimated population of about 2.3 million people. This population is packed into an area of little more than 280 square miles extending into three geographical counties. For local government administration (see figure 1, p. 2) there are six county boroughs—Birmingham, Dudley, Smethwick, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton—four boroughs and ten urban districts in Staffordshire, three boroughs in Worcestershire and two boroughs, together with two parishes of a rural district, in Warwickshire.⁽²⁾
3. The West Midlands conurbation is a highly industrialised area which has evolved from the steady outward spread of Birmingham and the merging together of the towns and districts to the north and west of Birmingham in the area known as the Black Country.⁽³⁾ Most of the Black Country is in Staffordshire but it extends also into the Worcestershire boroughs of Oldbury, Stourbridge and Halesowen. The Warwickshire districts of Solihull and Sutton Coldfield have developed on the eastern edge of the conurbation as mainly dormitory suburbs. The outer parts of these two districts and of some of the

⁽¹⁾ Except where the context indicates otherwise references in this report to "the Act" or "the Act of 1958" are to the Local Government Act, 1958; and references to "the regulations" are to the Local Government Commission Regulations 1958, S.I. 1958 No. 2115.

⁽²⁾ Details of the area, population and rateable values of these local authority areas are given in Appendix I.

⁽³⁾ In this report, we have used the term "Black Country", except where the context otherwise requires, as a convenient shorthand term for the special review area other than Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield and the Meriden parishes, although we appreciate that the outer districts differ in many respects from those at the core of the Black Country.



Figure 1. Existing Local Government Areas.

districts on the edge of the Black Country—notably Tettenhall, Sedgley, Aldridge and Brownhills in Staffordshire and Stourbridge and Halesowen in Worcestershire—form part of the green belt⁽¹⁾. In 1960 just over half of the inhabitants of the special review area lived on the eastern side in Birmingham and the Warwickshire districts. The rest lived in the five county boroughs and seventeen county districts of the Black Country.

⁽¹⁾At the time this report was written green belt proposals had been submitted for the areas of Warwickshire and Worcestershire adjacent to the conurbation and were waiting final Ministerial approval. The Staffordshire draft proposals had been approved in principle.

Birmingham

4. Birmingham, with a population of well over a million, is the dominating authority in the special review area and it is the regional centre for a much wider area beyond. Many people travel into Birmingham every day for work, shopping, business and recreation. Yet it is not a focus of daily life over the conurbation as a whole in the same way that the centre of London is the focus for work, for pleasure and for civic loyalty of a Greater London area. This is due partly to Birmingham's geographical position on one side of the conurbation; and partly to the differences between Birmingham and the Black Country in tradition, in character and in development.

5. Industry in the Black Country began with the exploitation of the local deposits of coal and ironstone. The famous Thirty Foot Coal of the South Staffordshire coalfield was worked at innumerable small pits; around them sprang up industrial villages and townships, each of which tended to develop its own special craft or trade. The prosperity of Birmingham, which had no coal or iron of its own, was founded upon a more varied craftsmanship. It became known as the city of a thousand trades and from the second half of the 18th century when Boulton and Watt revolutionised industrial methods by their development of steam it grew fast. In the course of its growth Birmingham absorbed other administrative areas. Yet it grew steadily outwards from a single centre and has kept its identity as one city which today can be planned and administered as a whole. The citizens of Birmingham have a civic pride which owes allegiance to Birmingham, not to the West Midlands conurbation; and neither they nor the people of the Black Country would acknowledge any common bond of loyalty and tradition beyond physical proximity and the social and economic ties which exist between any big centre and its surrounding area.

The Black Country—Local Communities

6. Like Birmingham, the Black Country is a product of the industrial revolution. But the past has left its mark more firmly, not only in the derelict land left by abandoned coal and iron workings but also in the social and administrative structure. It is an area where feelings, whether of pride in a craft or loyalty to a place, are intensely local. The pattern of the old industrial villages still survives within the county districts of today. Old affinities are still remembered—like Cradley for chains, Willenhall for locks, Wednesbury for tubes—even although the local craft of earlier times may have moved to other areas or grown to a great industry drawing its workers from far and wide.

7. Traces of the original industrial villages may be discerned in nearly all the districts at the heart of the Black Country. Bilston and Wednesbury, perhaps, have had a more organic growth than some of the others; they have had a continuous existence as old Staffordshire townships and as modern administrative units, and have been able in the course of their growth to absorb smaller communities without losing their sense of identity. Elsewhere the primary loyalty is often more to the local community than to the present administrative area. In Coseley and Tipton, in Brierley Hill and Rowley Regis, the individuality of the separate settlements of which they are made up is still strongly marked.

On the other hand townships like Blackheath, Cradley, Great Bridge and Princes End have retained their identity as communities in spite of being split between two administrative areas⁽⁵⁾.

8. The historical development of the Black Country shows industrial sprawl at its worst. Factories spread out from their earlier pithead sites along the canals and railways, houses grew up in the shadow of the factories and spread in ribbons along the main roads, so that one district runs into another in a featureless expanse of factories and workers' dwellings. The result is that there is now a great burden of slum clearance and redevelopment to be faced. Many houses are obsolescent and likely to need replacing soon in spite of anything that may be done to patch them up for the time being. All the districts at the core of the Black Country suffer socially and administratively from having very many houses of low rateable value (see Appendix 2) and from having little variety in the social groups to which their inhabitants belong. This deprives them of the contribution which people of different social backgrounds and occupations can make to the social health of the community. Further, while the whole area has become urbanised, this process has taken place in an unplanned way and with few of the amenities that make for a satisfactory urban life.

9. The proportion of people employed in the service industries throughout the Black Country is much below the national average⁽⁶⁾. Virtually the only centres which have much to offer in the way of urban amenities are the county boroughs and at the extreme south-western edge of the area the borough of Stourbridge, which still retains much of its character as a Worcestershire market town. The concentration of shopping and other facilities in these towns and the pattern of main roads are shown in Map D. The Black Country county boroughs are all in varying degrees centres of social and economic life for the surrounding districts. Wolverhampton, which is the furthest from Birmingham, has the most strongly marked sphere of influence. Nearer to Birmingham the local importance of the county boroughs tends to be obscured by Birmingham's dominance as regional centre, but even Smethwick and West Bromwich, which are nearest to the centre of Birmingham, have their own local sphere of influence.

The Black Country—Local Government

10. The pattern of local government in the Black Country has reflected its historical development. Whereas Birmingham has grown outwards from one centre to form a single county borough of a million inhabitants, the Black Country, which is a network of local communities, shows a corresponding complexity in its local government. In the Black Country a population about the size of Birmingham's receives its local government services from five county borough councils, seventeen district councils and two county councils. The

⁽⁵⁾The boundary between Rowley Regis and Halesowen runs through the Blackheath shopping centre; Cradley is in Halesowen and Cradley Heath in Rowley Regis; Great Bridge is split between Tipton and West Bromwich, Princes End between Tipton and Coseley.

⁽⁶⁾The Ministry of Labour's classification of "service employment" covers building, public services, transport and distribution, insurance, banking and finance, professional services and miscellaneous. In the Black Country 33 per cent. of the insured population are so employed compared with 41 per cent. in Birmingham, Solihull and Sutton Coldfield. The figures for the special review area as a whole and for England and Wales are 37 and 54 per cent. respectively.

multiplicity of local authorities is reflected in the complexity of the local administration in the Black Country. This is illustrated by Map C which shows the organisation of four of the most important local government services. About half of the people of the area live in the county boroughs and get all their local services from a single authority; the other half get their services under the two-tier system partly from their district councils and partly from the county council. There are great differences in the size of these authorities and in their ability to deal comprehensively and effectively with the problems of the conurbation as it is today. The county boroughs range in size from Wolverhampton with a population of about 145,000 to Dudley which is just under 64,000. The biggest of the county districts is the Worcestershire borough of Oldbury with 55,000. In Staffordshire the largest of the boroughs is Rowley Regis with 49,000; of the urban districts only Brierley Hill has a population of more than 50,000 and Amblecote, the smallest, has a population of barely 3,000.

Summary

11. Such then was the area given to us to review. It contains a population of over 2 millions, half of them living under a structure of local government apparently simple, the other half under a structure undeniably complex. The whole area has been one of the world's most famous work places since the time of the industrial revolution, rich in its traditions and spirit of local community but facing the challenge of an immense problem of urban renewal and redevelopment. In this chapter we have tried to give a general picture of the area as it appeared to us before we considered the views set before us by local authorities and others; in the next chapter we describe how, within the framework laid down by the Act and regulations, we set about the task of investigating local government in the review area and what, in brief, we were told about it.

Chapter 2

The Conduct of the Review

Procedure

12. The main lines of our procedure are laid down for us in the Act, which requires us to consult all the local authorities in the review area, together with such other public authorities and bodies as we think may be concerned. We decided to start by getting written submissions from the local authorities and in order to have their information in a standard form we sent them a questionnaire about their own problems and about the special review area generally. We also invited views from a wide range of national and local organisations (see Appendix 3). All the local authorities replied to the questionnaire and many of them followed up their answers with comments on the submissions of other authorities. A list of other authorities and bodies who wrote to us is given in Appendix 4.

13. The Act provides that once a review has started the Minister of Housing and Local Government can make orders for the variation of the review area. Three district councils in Staffordshire asked for their areas to be excluded, and Warwickshire County Council asked for the exclusion of all three of their districts in the special review area. Details of these applications, which were made under Section 25(1) of the Act, and the reasons why we did not recommend that any order should be made, are given in Appendix 5, Part I. We ourselves took action under Section 25(2) to make certain minor additions to the review area, and we refer to this in Chapter 6.

14. Our main consultations took the form of a series of meetings at which we saw separately representatives of each local authority in the review area. These meetings, which were held in London, gave us the opportunity of free, frank and informal discussion on the problems of the area and the views of the local authorities. We also saw representatives of several of the interested bodies. During the course of the review Commissioners and senior members of the staff visited the review area to look into particular problems and further meetings with some of the authorities were held locally.

15. After these preliminary investigations and discussions we published our draft proposals, which are set out in Chapter 6, and then held the conferences required by statute, with which we deal in Chapter 7.

Suggestions for Change

16. We received a great many observations and suggestions. Some were to the effect that no change at all was necessary. Others accepted the need for change but differed widely on the kind of change required. Most of the local authorities thought that the special review area fell into two halves and that there was no need for drastic alteration in the local government structure except in the Black Country. The only proposals for comprehensive reorganisation came from some of the political parties and bodies interested in planning.

17. Staffordshire County Council, whose area includes a population of 454,000 in fourteen county districts within the Black Country, produced proposals for enlarging these county districts by amalgamation (see figure 4 and Appendix 6). But they did not consider that the position of the county boroughs need be changed and they can therefore be regarded as primarily upholders of the present structure in principle, although suggesting substantial modifications of it in detail. The other two counties can be regarded as even firmer supporters of the *status quo*. Worcestershire, three of whose districts⁽¹⁾ are wholly or partly



Figure 2. *Rearrangement of Local Government in the Black Country:
The Four County Borough Proposal.*

⁽¹⁾The boroughs of Oldbury, Stourbridge and Halesowen.



*Figure 3. Reorganization of Local Government in the Black Country:
The Seven County Borough Proposal.*

in the Black Country, originally suggested no change (although they supported Stourbridge's proposal to absorb Amblecote urban district from Staffordshire). Warwickshire, whose stake in the special review area is limited to Solihull, Sutton Coldfield and the two Meriden parishes, said they had no knowledge of the problems in the rest of the review area and saw no reason for any changes affecting them.

18. The county districts took up a number of different attitudes. Most of the outer districts of the conurbation either wanted no change (Meriden, Sedgley, Tettenhall) or were interested in extending into the adjacent rural areas without

wanting any alteration in the general structure (Aldridge, Brownhills, Halesowen, Stourbridge, Sutton Coldfield and Wednesfield). Willenhall and Amblecote were ready to merge with neighbouring county districts. Of the districts at the core of the Black Country only Coseley and Tipton thought that no changes at all were needed. The others were agreed on the need for change but differed about the form it should take. Bilston and Brierley Hill supported the Staffordshire proposals; Wednesbury, Darlaston, Oldbury and Rowley Regis wanted to join with neighbours in forming new or enlarged county boroughs. Solihull wished to become a county borough on its own.



Figure 4. Reorganisation of Local Government in the Black Country: Staffordshire's Original Proposals.



Figure 5. Reorganisation of Local Government in the Black Country: Staffordshire's Revised Proposals.

19. Of the county boroughs, Birmingham wanted no change except a boundary extension at Wythall (see p. 58) and generally supported the continuance of the existing county boroughs in the Black Country. All the county boroughs in the Black Country thought that the area would be better administered if it was divided up into a number of county borough areas, although they differed on the details of how this should be done. Dudley proposed seven county boroughs as illustrated in figure 3 (details of the areas to be included and the estimated populations being given in Appendix 7). The county districts of Wednesbury and Darlaston were broadly in agreement with Dudley's proposals and wanted

a county borough in which they themselves would be linked with Bilston and Willenhall. Smethwick proposed that the boroughs of Halesowen, Oldbury and Rowley Regis should be amalgamated with Smethwick to form a new county borough, and that the whole of the Black Country should be divided into five county boroughs. Their proposal for a county borough based on Smethwick was supported by Oldbury and Rowley Regis but opposed by Halesowen. Walsall made no specific proposals but thought that there should be a pattern of county boroughs over the whole Black Country. West Bromwich proposed the division of the Black Country into four county boroughs as shown in figure 2 (further details being given in Appendix 8). Wolverhampton put forward a proposal similar to that of West Bromwich.

20. We should emphasise that these proposals by the local authorities were their original submissions. Several of them changed their proposals during the course of the review, after they had seen our draft proposals, and we set out these changes later in the report.

21. The other bodies who put proposals or observations to us fell into three main groups—political parties, professional organisations, and societies interested in planning. There were also many other bodies, especially those concerned with social work, and many individuals who put their experience and ideas to us and whose material we studied.

22. Of the political parties the West Midlands Regional Council of the Labour Party proposed the formation of large "most-purpose" authorities responsible for the majority of local government functions, with a regional authority responsible for overall planning and certain services, including higher technical and technological education and sewage disposal. The Midlands District Committee of the Communist Party also thought that the solution to the problems of the special review area lay in the adoption of a two-tier regional system. They proposed an upper-tier Regional Council, or Councils, with a minimum population of one million, responsible for major planning, police, fire, passenger transport, water supply and trunk sewers, and having financial powers; and second-tier district councils, with minimum populations of 60,000, to administer housing, education, roads, police (in large boroughs) and other services. The West Midlands Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations said that they opposed any extension of the conurbation.

23. A number of bodies representing professional interests put to us the advantage of all-purpose authorities in the conurbation. The National Health Service Executive Councils of Dudley, Smethwick, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton (the last two submitting detailed memoranda) took this view; and the Association and Guild of Public Health Inspectors wanted one authority in each local area responsible for all the environmental health services. The Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association also thought the one-tier authority better for the services in which they were interested.

24. The National Union of Teachers, who were particularly helpful in sending an initial memorandum and obtaining more detailed views from their members, sent us their views on the working of educational administration in the conurbation, as did the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions.

25. Of the bodies interested in planning, the Town and Country Planning Association felt that theoretically the best local government organisation for the special review area, the green belt, and a further considerable area which could receive overspill, would be a two-tier system with a directly elected top-tier authority co-ordinating the wider aspects of administration, and second-tier units of approximately 60,000 population dealing with all local matters. They doubted whether such a drastic reorganisation was practicable, however, and confined their proposals to a reorganisation of all the Black Country local authorities (including county boroughs) into lower-tier authorities with populations of 60,000—140,000, which would be allocated more equally than at present between the counties of Staffordshire and Worcestershire. The Midlands New Towns Society were mainly concerned with the preservation of the green belt, which they thought was best left to the county councils. They did not think that Birmingham should be allowed to extend at Wythall and were opposed to a county borough solution for the rest of the special review area.

Research

26. In reviewing this evidence, we were struck by the fact that, while there were many proposals for altering either the areas or even the whole structure of local government in the conurbation, there had been little objective study of the problems which any such changes ought to remedy. We found little if any factual analysis of how particular services worked over a given area, how they fell short of what was desirable, what difficulties were being encountered, and to what extent any such difficulties could be removed by alterations in the structure of local government. Independent studies on these lines would have been of great value to us if they had existed. It is not work that local authorities, with their many day to day commitments, can be expected to undertake but we note that a considerable amount of material of this kind was the basis on which memoranda were submitted to the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London, particularly by a group of members of the staff of the London School of Economics. At our suggestion, certain material was prepared for us by members of the staff of Birmingham University. We are grateful to them for the time and trouble that they took, and we found their contributions helpful. They made us regret that more work has not been done along these lines. The Universities have a special contribution to make in organising such studies, both because they have on their staff representatives of the various academic disciplines who together provide the necessary specialised knowledge and techniques and because they are near enough to the problems to be able to work with local knowledge and yet sufficiently independent not to be associated with any local interest.

27. While such studies were not put before us in any comprehensive form, we were able to do a certain amount of work along these lines with the assistance of our own staff, which includes not only officers with administrative experience of the working of local government but also technical officers with professional qualifications in geography, economics and statistics. We were thus able to make our own assessment of the problems as a result of our enquiries, of the close study of the factual material we received and of innumerable discussions, conducted in an informal and confidential atmosphere, with local authorities, other bodies and individuals. We cannot emphasise too strongly the advantage we gained from the fact that we were able to conduct these discussions informally, so that both we and those we met could speak freely and frankly, could

find out what were the real difficulties which were troubling local authorities and try out a variety of possible solutions, without at that stage being committed to any. It was as a result of all these discussions and enquiries that we were able to form our own views, which we present in the following chapter, about the problems of local government structure in the special review area.

Chapter 3

Problems of the Area

28. When we came to consider the great mass of material put to us by the local authorities and other bodies, the first thing that struck us was that virtually every local authority and most of the other organisations agreed—however much they differed on other points—that Birmingham and the Black Country should be considered separately. There was justification for this attitude in the existing pattern of local government, since one local authority provides every local government service for over one million people in Birmingham, while in the Black Country a similar population is served by no less than twenty-four separate local authorities. But we could not accept without investigation the assertion that the area had no problems which affected it as a whole.

29. So far as the Black Country is concerned, we had to consider how to deal with those defects in the local government structure which stem from the multiplicity of authorities and the complexity of the structure, those which arise from authorities which are too small and those which are due to urban development having outgrown local government boundaries appropriate to a past age. So far as Birmingham is concerned, the issues which faced us were whether the authority is too big and what its relationship should be both to its immediate neighbours and to the rest of the review area.

PROBLEMS OF THE BLACK COUNTRY

The Complex Structure

30. The first major defect of local government in the Black Country is its complexity. We have seen that the local government structure of the Black Country comprises two counties, five county boroughs and seventeen county districts. The multiplicity of authorities has led to confusion, delay and a feeling of frustration in the districts at the core of the Black Country regarding the provision of services; and the division of the area between counties and county boroughs has forced the local authorities to plan on a basis which does not correspond to the fundamental planning needs.

31. The organisation of services within the counties is particularly complex and confusing. Oldbury, in Worcestershire, for example, is an excepted district for education⁽¹⁾ and has an area health committee,⁽²⁾ but all its other county services are administered direct from the county headquarters in Worcester. In the Staffordshire part of the Black Country there are no excepted districts, but there is delegation to area committees for health and to divisional executives for education.⁽³⁾ The county administration of other services is decentralised to

⁽¹⁾Delegation of education powers may be to either an excepted district or a divisional executive. A divisional executive is an *ad hoc* body of county and district council representatives with some co-opted members; an excepted district is a county district whose council exercise delegated powers of educational administration by direct delegation from the county and not merely by sending members to a divisional executive.

⁽²⁾Area health committees are area sub-committees of the County Health Committee with some of their members nominated by district councils.

⁽³⁾See footnote ⁽¹⁾ above.

district offices without any participation by local committees. Under the Town and Country Planning Acts powers to deal with applications for planning permission are delegated to every district council, subject to an over-riding control by the county council which is exercised in the first place through area planning committees and area planning officers.

32. For purposes of the various area, divisional and district organisations the Staffordshire districts have been grouped together. The groupings are different for different services; some groups include authorities outside the Black Country and the centres of local administration for the various services are rarely in the same town. One of the divisional education committees has its offices in the county borough of Dudley and the welfare service for most of the area operates from an office in the county borough of Wolverhampton. The complexity of the administration is illustrated by Map C, which shows the location of the various area offices.⁽⁴⁾ To take two examples, the people of Bilston must go to Wednesbury for the local health and education offices, to Wolverhampton for the local county welfare office, and to Sedgley for the area planning office; the people of Coseley must go to Dudley for the education office, Brierley Hill for the area health office, Wolverhampton for the welfare office and Sedgley for the area planning office.

33. We think this dispersal of local offices an important point for two reasons. First, in our view it should be made easy for those in need of help from any of the local government services to discuss their problems with someone who can give skilled advice and who can take action if need be. Unless the administrative offices are in an easily accessible and well-known centre, this is difficult. Second, it is true that the number of people who need to go to the local office, rather than consult a representative of the local authority (such as a health visitor) in their own homes may be small. But they are likely to be people who cannot travel easily—the old, the infirm, the expectant mother, the mother with young children who cannot be left at home. Such people should not have to travel further than they need nor have to go from one place to another if, as often happens, they need the help of more than one local service.

34. Our many discussions with the individual district councils and with local organisations left us in no doubt that the local administration of county services from so many different places, with ultimate control from a centre of administration 20 miles or more away, has often resulted in confusion to the ordinary ratepayer and a sense of frustration in the district councils and their staffs. This feeling on the part of some of the district councils was reinforced by an impression which some of them had that the problems of the Black Country were not appreciated by the county council as a whole, so that decisions of importance to them were settled by people who did not know the local conditions. Other authorities thought that the urban area of the counties suffered in comparison with the neighbouring county boroughs in the conurbation because the county council kept some aspects of their expenditure on services to a level suitable, perhaps, for the rural areas but not for the urban. These criticisms of Staffordshire or Worcestershire may not be entirely fair. But through no fault of their own the counties, and in particular Staffordshire, have been forced by the

⁽⁴⁾A list of these offices and the areas they serve is given in Appendix 9.

existing structure of local government in this area to set up elaborate administrative arrangements which we think any reorganisation of the structure should seek to avoid. We have mentioned the confusion to the public and the effect on the district councils; the present system also involves much loss of time and a great deal of additional effort for county council members and staff in carrying out their duties under these circumstances. To put it no higher, this is not the best way of organising the business of local government in this area. No one in his senses, if he was setting up a system of local government from the beginning, would do it like this.

35. We are not here passing a general judgment on the principle of delegation, which is a recognised part of the machinery of local government, but in the circumstances of the Black Country the administrative arrangements forced on Staffordshire have produced delays, duplication of effort and a feeling of frustration. In our view this must be so, as long as there is a substantial number of authorities of different types and sizes concerned with the local government services.

Unreal Basis of Planning

36. The second major defect of the present structure is its effect on planning and development in the Black Country. One of the most serious problems facing both county boroughs and county districts—at least those districts which form the core of the Black Country—is what is now known as “urban renewal”. This means not only slum clearance and redevelopment of central areas but also tackling the industrial slums, resiting industry, getting rid of derelict land and generally dealing with all parts of the town which are worn out, congested or unsuitable for modern living—in short, reshaping the urban environment for the next generation. Not all the local authorities in the West Midlands conurbation have fully realised the true nature of this problem and the scale on which it must be tackled. It is in the first place a planning problem, which needs to be considered in relation to the main centres of population, commerce and industry. In the Black Country this means above everything else planning the county boroughs and their neighbouring districts together.

37. The division of responsibility for the planning of the area between county and county boroughs makes this difficult. Staffordshire's claim that they can and do effectively co-ordinate the planning of the Black Country, which they reiterated at the conference (see Chapter 7, paragraph 113), cannot be accepted. They are responsible for less than half of the population of the area and, although there is consultation on reasonably good terms with the county boroughs about fringe problems, their planning of the districts seems on the whole to deny rather than to acknowledge the links with the county boroughs. As a county, they can have no say in the decisions of the county boroughs, although those vitally affect the county areas immediately adjoining. Staffordshire's planning of the county districts separately from the problems of county boroughs cannot produce the best long-term results for the area as a whole. Inevitably, in our view, the planning problems of the area are prejudiced by the artificial approach forced on all the authorities by the circumstances in which they have been placed. The planning of the future of the county districts separately from that of the county boroughs, which they adjoin and with which they are so closely linked, is therefore one of the major defects of the present local government structure in the Black Country.

38. The third major defect of the local government structure in the Black Country is that many of the local government areas are too small for full effectiveness. This applies both to county districts and county boroughs.
39. *County districts.* Most of the districts in the Black Country have populations of between 20,000 and 40,000. In many parts of the country such a size would be an adequate basis for a strong district able to provide services appropriate to local needs. But the adequacy of a local authority must be judged in relation to the problems with which it is faced, the circumstances of the area and the alternative forms of organisation which are possible. The Black Country is an area with a great expanse of drab and obsolete development, presenting problems far beyond the ordinary work of building houses and running the day-to-day services of environmental health. In the face of the need to improve the whole urban environment the district councils in the Black Country are limited in the quality and range of staff they can employ. Above all they are limited in choice; many of them have done well in building houses and even in reclaiming derelict land, but they lack experienced staff and resources to tackle the bigger and more specialised jobs of high density building, urban renewal and central redevelopment. We are not saying they cannot tackle this work at all; but we say that they are at a serious disadvantage when they do attempt it. Something can be done to make good their deficiencies by help from the county council's planning and architectural staff. But such reliance on outside help is not as satisfactory as having the work done by local authorities big enough to employ suitably qualified officers of their own.
40. The scale on which development will have to be carried out provides a further strong argument for integration of areas. Some of the district councils have told us that no great burden will fall on them, either financially or in terms of staff, as most of the work will be carried out by private enterprise. But we believe this should be looked at in broader perspective. It is work which will need partnership between the local authorities and private developers, and in order to play their part adequately the authorities will need the right kind of professional advice on their own staffs and adequate resources of their own. This means having authorities big enough to carry qualified advisers for architecture, planning and estate management. It should not be just a part-time job for the borough engineer, nor can it be done by a small borough or urban district with occasional help from the county planning office. An authority which has to "count the pennies" even in relation to the staff it can afford is not well placed to do this kind of work in a field which is of the greatest importance to the future of this whole area.
41. The need for larger districts is in our view supported by the fact that Staffordshire themselves proposed (especially in their revised proposals—see figure 5, p.10) to strengthen the districts by reorganising them into units of generally twice their present population. The county council worked out for us how, after one district of 60,000 population was substituted for two of 30,000, there would be improvements because of the ability to employ more highly-paid and qualified staff, as well as savings in staff and costs. We take this argument further and conclude that still greater savings and better staffing could be achieved by the formation of even larger units.

42. *Small county boroughs.* Two county boroughs in the Black Country, Dudley and Smethwick, have populations of 64,000 and just over 71,000 respectively. The effect of the Act and the regulations is to require a population of 100,000 for the creation of a new county borough, unless there are special circumstances to justify going below that figure. The Act does not apply any such population test to existing county boroughs but in our view county boroughs which fall much below that figure are handicapped in their ability to provide a full range of services. We think that this is particularly true of an area like the Black Country where there is a heavy physical burden of redevelopment and where services must be provided for people living in congested and often unhealthy surroundings. In these circumstances there must be serious doubts about the ability of both Smethwick and Dudley to continue as they are.

43. The developing social services such as education, health and welfare depend more and more for their quality, scope and character on the ability of the authority to carry a first-class team of professional, supervisory and other staff and to provide a wide range of institutions. This is not a question of failing to provide basic everyday services but of the conditions in which comprehensive, progressive services can be attempted, particularly for special categories. Provision for the handicapped of all kinds, for the special needs of children in the later stages of education and for the development of preventive medicine in the home are examples of the growing need for services which only the larger authorities are in a position to provide effectively. In their evidence to us even Wolverhampton which, with a population of nearly 150,000, is the largest county borough in the Black Country, gave examples from the education, health, children's and other services of how they could improve their services if their population were appreciably larger. For instance, they could provide a better education service by extending the range of professional coverage in schools inspection, and do more in school health, especially for handicapped children; the Medical Officer could be assisted by a senior medical officer in charge of each of the main branches of work.

44. Of the two smallest county boroughs in the Black Country Smethwick has the larger population with just over 71,000, but it has the worst land problem of all the county boroughs. It has already had to look to its neighbours for land for housing, schools and open space, it has a very high proportion of obsolescent housing and it faces in the next few years the problem of trying to raise the standards of its services while its population is falling. Of the five county boroughs in the Black Country Smethwick is the most overshadowed by Birmingham and in our view its problems are insoluble except as a suburb of Birmingham or in partnership with other authorities.

45. Dudley is less overshadowed by Birmingham and as a result of its relative isolation has managed to develop as the business and shopping centre of a fairly wide area around. On the other hand its population is barely 64,000, it has already had to look outside its area for land for open space and in addition to a shortage of land that can be easily developed it has a big problem of derelict land. We have no doubt too that Dudley, like Smethwick, would be able to improve the range and quality of its services with a larger population.

46. Further, while we would not consider the position of West Bromwich and Walsall as strictly comparable, on grounds of population, with that of Dudley and Smethwick, we feel that their services could be materially improved if they were larger, and this is particularly relevant in the Black Country, where the concentration and density of population makes the creation of larger authorities readily practicable.

Outdated Boundaries

47. The artificiality of many of the local government boundaries affects all the authorities in the Black Country, but its consequences are most serious for the county boroughs. The county boroughs have developed as centres of economic and social life for the neighbouring districts, but their isolation for local government purposes from the districts has produced difficulties for them. Most of them are now desperately short of building land. The difficulties of building outside their boundaries and the social consequences of this for the county boroughs themselves have made evident the need for a more rational allocation of the land around them. The county boroughs, representing the main urban centres, are losing population to the peripheral areas, where more land is available for building and people can get a house with a garden. Among the population which is lost in this way are the younger families, because these need accommodation with more space for children and, more generally, the higher-income groups. As a result, the county boroughs, as well as other authorities in the heart of the conurbation, are beginning to lose variety in the social and economic make-up of their populations. This is bad for the vigour of local government and reduces the supply of voluntary leadership of all kinds. It means that the larger authorities have difficulty in finding councillors of sufficient calibre to make the best use of the authority's potentialities, while first-class people who have moved to the outer areas either take no interest in local government or find themselves, as members of the smaller authorities, with too little scope for their abilities. We have met a number who would have a valuable contribution to make as county borough members.

48. Most of the people who have moved out continue to make daily use of the town centres for work, shopping, professional advice, entertainment and many other services. Yet they no longer have any say or responsibility as local government electors in the planning of the town or in matters which are of daily concern to them such as corporation transport, traffic control, parking and so on. We are sure that this divorce of interests is a powerful factor in bringing about a state of apathy and indifference in local government. It seems to us a particularly unfortunate state of affairs in an area like the Black Country which, as the West Midland Group have pointed out,⁽¹³⁾ is notably poor in the amenities of civilised living—in shopping centres, hotels, restaurants, theatres, concert halls and assembly rooms and, we would add, in athletic stadiums, swimming baths and other facilities for recreation. This is an age when people must look increasingly to local government to support the arts and enhance the quality of urban life; yet in the Black Country many of the people most likely to be interested in such things have no say in their provision, because as electors they are cut off by meaningless administrative boundaries from the main civic centres in which such provision should be made.

⁽¹³⁾See the West Midland Group, *Conurbation* (London, 1948), p. 17.

PROBLEMS OF BIRMINGHAM

49. The only problem to which Birmingham drew our attention was their immediate need to house population outside their existing boundaries, whether by peripheral expansion or by overspill beyond the green belt. Their application for boundary extension at Wythall put this problem in its sharpest form. But since at the same time they had applied for permission to develop the land in question we decided that we could not deal with their claim for boundary extension until the planning issue had been settled (see page 59).

50. There were however other problems we felt bound to consider in relation to Birmingham. There was first of all the question of its size. With a population of over one million it is the largest county borough in the country and it was frequently said to us that Birmingham's administration must be too large to be anything but a coldly efficient and impersonal machine. There were also some who said that it had passed the point where increase in size brings greater efficiency. We ought to add that the people who said this to us in passing, as it were, produced very little supporting evidence for these statements. It was more a vague feeling on their part that anything so big as Birmingham must, in the nature of things, have ceased to be human and closely in touch with people's needs. We discussed this issue with Birmingham when we saw them and our views on it are given in Chapter 5 (p. 28).

51. The second question which seemed to us to be important was the relation of Birmingham to its immediate neighbours. Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield and the parishes of Kingshurst and Castle Bromwich (not to mention Smethwick and the other areas adjacent to Birmingham in Worcestershire and in the Black Country) form part of a single continuous built-up area. The boundaries between them and Birmingham are bound to be artificial. It is true that the adjacent areas have an individuality of their own, yet this can also be found in many of the outer suburbs of the city of Birmingham itself. These areas have each a different place in the local government structure. Solihull is a fast-growing non-county borough, which sought to become a county borough and thus separate itself from its parent county of Warwickshire. Sutton Coldfield on the other hand is a non-county borough without prospect, in the foreseeable future, of growing to a population sufficient to enable it to become a county borough. Kingshurst and Castle Bromwich, in spite of the facts that along much of their common boundary they are indistinguishable from the city and contain many people who have come very recently from Birmingham, are parishes in a rural district. We had to consider whether it was practicable to make Birmingham even bigger by extending it to take in these adjacent areas or to devise some new pattern of local government common to both Birmingham and its immediate neighbours. Alternatively it might be that the present situation, in spite of its apparent anomalies, was yet the most practicable one, having regard to the size of the communities involved and the way in which the local government services had developed.

52. The third question we had to consider was the relation of Birmingham to the rest of the special review area as a whole. As we have already said, one of the remarkable facts about this review area is the contrast in local government structure between Birmingham and the Black Country, with the result that the local authorities in one half of the review area felt they had little in common

with those in the other and proposed that each half should be treated separately. Birmingham themselves showed no real interest in the problems of the rest of the area and no close acquaintance with them. Yet Birmingham of course have many problems within their boundaries which are similar in character to those of county boroughs in the Black Country—problems of slum clearance and redevelopment and so on. We had to consider whether there were any wider problems which, *prima facie*, demanded a solution embracing the whole of the conurbation or the greater part of it. Very little concrete evidence about this was put before us in the course of our review, except as regards overspill of population and industry and also sewage disposal.

53. Since 1951 the congested inner areas of the conurbation have lost well over 100,000 people (Birmingham over 70,000 and ten Black Country authorities over 30,000) by outward migration. At the same time the outer districts of the conurbation gained over 60,000 people with the result that housing land is now becoming scarce in some of these districts. The special review area as a whole has experienced since 1951 a net loss of over 40,000 people by outward migration to areas beyond it. This voluntary movement of population from the congested areas has been reinforced in recent years by the beginnings of a planned overspill movement, and part of this (from Wolverhampton and Birmingham) has also gone to areas outside the conurbation. Taking into account the expected future natural growth of population, the increase in the number of families requiring separate accommodation and the continued redevelopment of the old high-density residential areas, it is clear that the outward movement of people, both by voluntary migration and planned overspill, will go on; and as land in the outer districts becomes used up overspill development will have to take place increasingly in new or expanded towns beyond the green belt. We deal in Chapter 12 with overspill and we explain there how the solution of Birmingham's overspill problem is tied to that of the Black Country, because of the industrial and other links between the different parts of the special review area.

54. We found a similar community of interest between Birmingham and part of the Black Country in sewage disposal; because of the technical nature of this problem, we reserve its description to Chapter 13, where we deal with our proposals for changes in the arrangements for controlling sewage disposal. We deal generally with problems affecting the conurbation as a whole in Chapter 5, when we consider the case for a continuous county.

Chapter 4

Suggested Solutions—Enlarged County Districts

55. We have now set out both the problems of the special review area as we saw them and, in outline, the types of suggestion for remedying them which we received from local authorities and others. We considered these possible solutions, individually and by contrasting them with each other, to see how far they would remedy the defects in the local government structure of the area and point the way to a solution which we could recommend.

56. In weighing up the possible approaches, we recognised that there was no one ideal solution. We had to be guided by the basic principles laid down in the Act—effectiveness and convenience—principles which often point in opposite directions. Any solution, therefore, had to effect some compromise between these two principles. It might be a drastic one and we were prepared to recommend a drastic solution if we were convinced that this was clearly necessary. On the other hand, a drastic or apparently tidy solution had no prescriptive right to be adopted for that reason alone; if there was some adjustment of the *status quo* which would make a worthwhile contribution to improving the local government structure of the area, there was obviously much to be said for causing as little upheaval as possible.

57. The material put before us pointed to three approaches. First, there was that suggested by Staffordshire County Council and a number of county districts: to enlarge the county districts in the Black Country while leaving the county boroughs more or less as they were. The second was a division of the Black Country into a number of county boroughs. Since most of the rest of the area already formed the single county borough of Birmingham, this pattern could be taken to apply virtually to the whole of the review area. The third was a "continuous county",¹¹⁾ either for the whole of the special review area including Birmingham or for the Black Country alone.

58. We deal first with the proposals for enlarged county districts submitted by Staffordshire County Council. We take this first because it is the course which involves the least drastic changes, but, in doing so, we have to bear in mind that it assumes there are no problems needing unified treatment over the special review area as a whole, or even in the Black Country, since the county boroughs are virtually left alone by the proposals.

Enlarged County Districts

59. Staffordshire proposed two schemes for the reorganisation of county districts in their part of the Black Country. The first scheme, to which we shall refer as Scheme A, was originally prepared in 1955 and then submitted in 1959 in

¹¹⁾This is defined by S.20 of the Act of 1958 as a county within the extent of which there are no county boroughs.

reply to our questionnaire. The second scheme, to which we shall refer as Scheme B, was published after our draft proposals were issued and formed the basis on which Staffordshire argued their case at the statutory conference. Although there were material differences between the two schemes, and Scheme B was admittedly influenced by our criticism of Scheme A in our draft proposals, we think it would be convenient to deal with them both together in this chapter, as both schemes postulate the continuance of a mixture of one-tier and two-tier administration in the Black Country, but with considerable enlargement, by amalgamation, of the county districts.

60. *Staffordshire's Scheme A.* The county council said that they felt that the two-tier system worked well, combining the advantages of local interest through the district councils with the considerable financial resources and technical experience of the county council. They wanted to preserve the local identity of the communities that had grown up over the years. Nevertheless, they thought it would be desirable to reduce eleven of the Black Country county districts to seven, with populations of between 50,000 and 60,000 in order to make possible the delegation of health, and perhaps welfare, services to their district councils direct instead of to joint committees; to unify the day-to-day administration of the personal and environmental health services under a single elected council at district level; and to produce more effective units for the district services. The seven new units proposed by the county council are illustrated in figure 4 and details of their populations and rateable values are given in Appendix 6. Of the eleven county districts included in Scheme A, only four—Bilston borough council and Brierley Hill, Sedgley and Willenhall urban district councils—were in favour of it.

61. Scheme A had some obvious attractions. The main one was that although it would reduce the number of county districts by about half it would still leave the administration of district services with authorities that were relatively close to the local electorate. This was clearly an important consideration and one to which we felt obliged to give a great deal of careful thought. Another advantage was that it would leave the headquarters administration of the county council intact. This again was something we felt must be looked at carefully, since although Staffordshire is a very large county and could, on the face of it, afford some reduction in population and resources, it is, nevertheless, always a serious matter when the planning of the major services has to be reorganised and adjusted to different circumstances and to a smaller scale.

62. But Scheme A had serious disadvantages:

- (i) It did not go to the root of the problems of the Black Country. The county boroughs would continue to be "walled-off" from the districts around them. The contribution that the districts and county boroughs could make towards the solution of each other's problems was ignored and there would still be a large number of county districts scattered in between the county boroughs but administered in isolation from them. The county council had never, it seemed to us, seriously examined or questioned the case for retaining so many local authorities in an urban area of this kind. Much of the complexity and confusion would remain.
- (ii) Although it could fairly be described as the smallest possible measure of reorganisation it did not receive wide support from the county districts;

only four out of eleven fully supported it, one was somewhat guardedly in favour and six were against it. Some of those opposing it did so because they objected to the amalgamations involved, others because they preferred a one-tier to a two-tier solution.

- (ii) The reconstructed districts would be too small to receive delegation of the county services and small, we thought, for the heavy tasks of urban renewal ahead of them. None of them would immediately have a population of 60,000 or over; and it was estimated that only four out of seven would have such a population even in 1971. This figure was crucial for the success of the scheme because it is the one at which under the Act there is, as of right, delegation to county districts of education, health and welfare functions. The county council wanted to end the existing delegation of these functions to committees of several county districts in favour of direct delegation to individual districts; but they could ensure this, within the framework of the Act, only if the county districts all had a population of 60,000 or over. It is true that the appropriate Minister can agree to delegation to a district of less than 60,000 if there are special circumstances; and the county council said that, if such delegation were not agreed to, they could still delegate to a district council by treating it as a sub-committee of the county council committee concerned. In our view, however, if a scheme of general application on this scale was to place such emphasis on direct delegation of county services to the districts, it should rely neither on the prospect of "special circumstances" nor on a device which was outside the normal arrangements for delegation laid down in the Act. The effectiveness of delegation in a special review area must be compared with what can be achieved by direct administration in a county borough pattern, so that the case for making exceptions to the 60,000 population rule seems to us to be weaker in a special review area than elsewhere.

63. *Staffordshire's Scheme B.* The county council's revised scheme was expressly designed to meet some, at least, of these criticisms. This scheme would have reduced the number of districts to six (see Appendix 6 and figure 5). As the districts would be fewer and larger, they could all have a population of over 60,000 by 1963 and therefore claim delegation as of right; the larger size of the districts would give more resources to each and reduce the disparity between the various units of local government in the area; and the scheme as revised was supported by a majority of the districts. The county council also suggested that, while it was not fundamental to their scheme, it might be appropriate that Dudley, instead of being a county borough in the geographical county of Worcester, should be a non-county borough in Staffordshire.

64. The case for Scheme B was fully and capably expounded at the conference and we considered it most carefully and in detail before coming to a final decision. The scheme had attractions in that it would produce larger units and was put forward with the agreement (in some cases reluctant) of most of the authorities concerned. We were impressed by the arguments put forward by the district councils about the feeling of local community spirit which had developed within the various districts in the Black Country, which they feared would be lost if they were amalgamated with different county boroughs. Yet we cannot see that the links between county districts in the Black Country and the rest of

largely rural Staffordshire are stronger than those between the county districts and their neighbouring county boroughs in the Black Country. It seemed to us that the community of interest arguments tended to show rather the unity of the Black Country as a whole, and that they might have been better used to support the idea of a continuous county instead of a solution which would still keep the Black Country divided between two counties and four or five county boroughs.

65. Scheme B seemed to us, while meeting some objections, still to retain some of the basic weaknesses of Scheme A, while introducing some new ones of its own. The revised scheme would have produced six local government areas. Half of these were open to serious objection. One was an enlargement of Rowley Regis, which did not want to join in the county scheme but wanted to form a county borough with Smethwick and Oldbury. The increase in the population of Rowley Regis was only possible at the expense of taking parts of Oldbury and Halesowen. Elsewhere the county council in Scheme B avoided the division of its own districts but the division of the Worcestershire districts would be equally unacceptable to the Worcestershire authorities. The second district which was open to objection was an amalgamation of Wednesfield and Willenhall. While Willenhall agreed, Wednesfield categorically stated that amalgamation with Willenhall would be as unacceptable to them as joining a county borough with Wolverhampton. The third district was an amalgamation of Bilston and Tipton. We could only regard this proposed unit as inexplicable; the two districts have some industrial similarities but otherwise they have no apparent affinities with each other. We could see no prospect of community of interest developing or of a common centre being formed for the two components of such an authority. Further, Scheme B would have produced boundaries clearly less satisfactory than Scheme A. For instance, under Scheme A, Bilston was to be joined with the north-eastern part of Coseley, into which Bilston's overspill is going; and Bilston submitted a cogent case for this as a boundary extension which would make for more effective and convenient local government. We think they were right, but in Scheme B these advantages had been given up and Bilston was to be linked with Tipton, without the north-eastern part of Coseley. Again, Scheme A recognised the obvious affinities between Bilston and the Portobello area of Willenhall by grouping them together; yet this too was discarded in Scheme B.

Conclusion on Staffordshire's Proposals

66. The outstanding failing, however, of Scheme B, as of Scheme A, was that it did not go to the root of the problems in the Black Country, as we have set them out in Chapter 3. The county boroughs (other than possibly Dudley, see paragraph 63) would continue to be cut off from the districts around them; and the result would be a structure of local government in substance as complex, artificial and confusing as the present one. Our conclusion about both of Staffordshire's schemes was that they would mean substantial change with insufficient real gain. The existing districts would disappear and in their place, for the most part, would be somewhat artificial authorities. This approach seemed to us neither one thing nor the other. We did not think that the proposed schemes went to the root of the problem or that the changes would be worthwhile. Accordingly we decided that, in the circumstances of the Black Country, a combination of enlarged county districts and the existing county boroughs would not remedy the defects of the local government structure.

Chapter 5

Suggested Solutions—County Boroughs and Continuous County

67. In the last chapter we considered the proposals of Staffordshire County Council for enlarged county districts in the Black Country, which would leave the county boroughs more or less unaffected; and we drew attention to the fact that this approach left untouched the problems common to both county boroughs and county districts as well as some problems of the county boroughs themselves. In this chapter we examine two approaches which would deal with the wider aspects of the situation, namely a pattern of county boroughs and a continuous county. Bound up with both of these is the question of the future of Birmingham. Birmingham as it is would fall naturally into a county borough pattern. On the other hand, we had to consider whether this single unit of over one million inhabitants should be broken up into smaller units and whether, if there were problems requiring a single authority for the whole of the special review area, Birmingham should—either entire or divided—be brought within it.

A PATTERN OF COUNTY BOROUGHHS

68. All the county boroughs and two of the county districts in the Black Country proposed that the whole of the Black Country should be divided into county boroughs. The authorities differed as to the number, size and boundaries of the county boroughs they proposed—the number varying between four and seven—and at this point of the argument we need not discuss these differences but concentrate only on the principle of having a few all-purpose authorities in the Black Country.

69. In brief the arguments of the local authorities in favour of this solution were:

- (a) the administration of the "county" services would be more convenient to the inhabitants of the present county districts if these were centred in the neighbouring county borough rather than in a county town much further away;
- (b) it would eliminate the need for delegation and the present complicated arrangements for decentralised administration of the county services;
- (c) the services now carried out by the district councils would be better provided with the larger resources of the expanded county boroughs;
- (d) administration of both "county" and "district" services would be better if they were unified under a single administration;
- (e) meaningless boundaries between county boroughs and county districts would be eliminated and units created which had more community of interest within them than the county districts now had with the rest of their respective counties.

70. Local authorities were not the only bodies to put the case for all-purpose authorities. A number of bodies representing professional interests put to us the advantage of such authorities in the conurbation. The National Health Service Executive Councils of Dudley, Smethwick, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, representing not only the local health authorities but also general practitioners, dentists, opticians and pharmacists,⁽¹⁾ maintained that the county boroughs were the most appropriate local authorities for securing efficient administration of the National Health Service, and that the areas of present county boroughs could also be extended to a reasonable extent. The Association and Guild of Public Health Inspectors were of the opinion that in each local area there should be only one authority with executive powers responsible for the environmental health services. For the architects, the Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association, which represents the architects in both the West Midlands Special and General Review Areas, said that in their experience of town planning and building controls two-tier local government involved frustration and waste of time and effort, and that the one-tier authority offered the better instrument of control. The National Union of Teachers found delay in the working of education administration in the county districts in the conurbation; they were opposed to more "excepted districts", that is direct delegation to individual districts, as well as to a continuous county in any form. The Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions recommended a division of the review area into county boroughs.

71. If a county borough pattern were to be adopted, it must substantially meet the problems of the Black Country as outlined in Chapter 3. How far would it do so? It would remove the defects in the local government structure arising from its complexity, and from the smallness of the county districts and of the smaller county boroughs. Many of the present out-dated boundaries would be eliminated, though not all, because there would still be boundaries within the Black Country between the county boroughs and, by the nature of the area, they would in most places have to run through built-up areas.

72. It is clear therefore that a county borough pattern would go a long way towards meeting the problems of the Black Country. In particular, by grouping a county borough and a number of county districts together, it could claim to deal with those problems which are common to a county borough and its neighbours and which Staffordshire County Council's proposals would leave untouched. To that extent, therefore, a pattern of county boroughs would clearly be a more effective solution of the problems of the Black Country than would any proposals aimed only at enlarging county districts. It would also have the advantage of building on the existing county borough organisations, though it would inevitably mean the loss of the present traditions and loyalties associated with the county districts.

73. But would a county borough pattern go far enough? Would it deal with those problems which are common to the whole of the special review area or even to the whole of the Black Country? This at once raises the question of the

⁽¹⁾The fifth Schedule to the National Health Service Act, 1946, lays down the membership of an Executive Council as seven doctors, three dentists and two pharmacists, all of whom are appointed by local committees of their professional colleagues, five members appointed by the Minister of Health and eight members appointed by the local health authority.

future of Birmingham, both as a county borough and in relation to the area as a whole. But, before considering Birmingham's relationship to the area as a whole, we had to consider whether the present county borough should be divided, because whether Birmingham would have to enter a continuous county as one very large unit or several smaller units was bound to affect the sort of continuous county that would result.

Birmingham

74. Birmingham is, in the legal phrase, *sui generis*. We choose this description in order to avoid any overtones of approval or disapproval which might accompany any other epithet. With its population of over a million it is the largest county borough authority in the country and that fact alone would make it reasonable for us to consider whether it should be left as it is. Apart from the case for including the area of the city in a continuous county, it is possible to consider breaking up Birmingham either to form several independent county boroughs or in order to construct a new county of Birmingham.

75. We think that there are three main considerations involved. First, it is feasible to divide Birmingham up into a number of separate areas, each with some claim to continuity with a separate historical community or communities and with recognisable breaks between the areas; and we did consider a scheme for dividing Birmingham into seven units. But, unlike the Black Country, which is composed of a number of major centres with smaller settlements grouped around them, Birmingham is essentially an out-growth from a single centre. Any division of the area, even if it could be supported by details of local history and topography, would run counter to the general history of Birmingham's development and to the fact that it is, in terms of economic and social life, a single city.

76. Secondly, the solution of Birmingham's slum clearance and internal redevelopment problems, as progress on them so far has shown, is dependent on the ability to treat Birmingham as a unit. It is of great advantage that in the course of slum clearance and redevelopment people can be moved from one part of the city to another; the commercial centre, the industrial inner ring and the residential suburbs all have complementary roles in an interlocking pattern, and there is a balance between richer and poorer areas. If these advantages are to be preserved, any scheme which divided up Birmingham would also have to include some machinery for bringing it together again.

77. Thirdly, it is obvious that a county borough of a million population must be open to the charge of being "remote" from the local people; and we say this without any intention of depreciating the efforts of the city council to make their administration as responsive to local wishes and feelings as possible. Even if, however, it could be argued convincingly that there would be a real gain in "convenience" in providing smaller units, we must also have regard to "effectiveness" in local government. We are sure that to break up the present highly developed administrative machine would not make local government in the city more effective, but rather the reverse. Moreover the vigorous and spontaneous reaction of the inhabitants of Perry Barr and Quinton, when we proposed to lop off these apparently more remote areas of Birmingham (see p. 36), shows that those for whom the services are provided are satisfied with what they get.

78. In short, on the balance of advantage, any hypothetical benefits which might arise from dividing so large an authority would be greatly outweighed in our judgment by the probable loss of effectiveness, by the certainty of upheaval and expense in setting up the new councils and offices required and by the complicated arrangements necessary as a result.

CONTINUOUS COUNTY

79. We now go on to consider whether there are any problems affecting all or part of the conurbation which could best be dealt with by a single upper-tier authority as part of the organisation of a continuous county. A continuous county as defined by section 20 of the Act would be a county made up of non-county boroughs and urban districts—any county borough included in it would accordingly cease to be an all-purpose authority. But the distribution of powers between the upper and lower tiers in such a county need not be the same as in any existing administrative county. It would depend upon the circumstances of the particular area and it would be open to us to propose that the authorities in the lower tier should have substantially more powers than the existing non-county boroughs, although they would fall short in some respects of the powers of an existing county borough. There is, of course, no presumption in the Act in favour of a continuous county as being in some way a "natural" form of local government for a special review area. It is one of a number of possible solutions and we considered it both from the aspect of the services requiring common treatment over a wide area, and by reference to the effect it would have upon the existing structure of local government.

80. There can be no doubt that the continuous county would make it possible to deal with the problems of co-ordination and out-dated boundaries within the special review area to which we have referred in Chapter 3; on the other hand, it would require more radical re-organisation of local government than any other solution. It was therefore essential to see to what extent the advantages of the continuous county could also be obtained by the alternative solution of a pattern of county boroughs.

A Continuous County for the Special Review Area

81. In examining the case for a continuous county we had to form our own idea of what it would be and how it would work to a much greater extent than with the other proposed solutions. None of the local authorities in the area—the bodies with the most direct experience of local government—made a continuous county their first choice, and only one or two gave it some tentative support in the course of their discussions with us. The organisations who did make suggestions on continuous county lines did not work out their proposals in detail and did not confine themselves to the special review area alone; they were, in our view, really in favour of regional local government, at any rate for the West Midlands, and were mainly led to this in the interests of planning and overspill. The general aim of these suggestions was the formation of most-purpose authorities responsible for most local government functions, with a regional authority extending over a very wide area responsible for overall planning and some other services. We could not consider any plan for regional

government since this is not within the scope of the Act and regulations. Nevertheless, we did take the essence of these proposals and apply them to see how they would work if applied only to the special review area.

82. The idea underlying these proposals was to put a number of "impersonal" services into the hands of a single upper-tier authority leaving all or most of the "personal" services with the lower-tier authority. This would reconcile the conflict between what is needed for the planning of "impersonal" services over a wide area, and what is needed for the more "personal" services, that is services more closely concerned with the personal needs of the local people. Services which are more effective when administered over a wide area or for a large population could thus be made the responsibility of the county authority while other services would be entrusted to the lower tier; the latter would especially be those services like health and welfare, where direct contact with the public is of particular importance. In this way it should be possible to give the authorities at both levels a worthwhile job to do with direct responsibility for a clearly defined set of functions.

Distribution of Functions

83. Functions which it was suggested to us might be exercised by a single authority for the conurbation were planning, traffic control, further education, sewage disposal, main highways, police, fire and ambulance services, water supply and road passenger transport. We had to exclude from consideration water supply and road passenger transport because in this area they are partly in private ownership and therefore unification, if it were desirable, could not be achieved by action under the Local Government Act, 1958. We began our consideration of the other functions by looking at the services one by one to see how each might be improved by co-ordination over an area wider than a single county borough.

Existing Arrangements for Co-ordination

84. Some arrangements for co-ordination already exist in the case of sewage disposal and technical education. We therefore looked at these services first to see whether the existing arrangements provided a pattern which could be followed for other services and whether they could be adapted to fit into the framework of a continuous county. We found, as we show in Chapter 13, that there was a case for reorganising the arrangements for sewage disposal. But the organisation of this service depends very largely on the actual lie of the land. The special review area is divided by a major watershed, so that part of it drains to the River Trent basin and part to the Severn. In these circumstances we saw no advantage in having a single authority to deal with sewage disposal for the whole conurbation and therefore no need to create a continuous county for this particular function.

85. The arguments for having a single authority for technical education lie in the specialist nature of many of the courses especially in advanced technology; the wide catchment areas of so many of the colleges; and the consequent need to avoid overlapping of courses. On the other hand, to unify responsibility for technical education would split it off from primary and secondary education and from other aspects of further education. This is thought by most educationists to be undesirable. Further, so far as co-operation is needed because the

catchment areas of some colleges are so wide, it is required on a regional basis—that is to say, over the five geographical counties of the West Midlands—and not merely over the Black Country or the special review area alone. Machinery for such co-ordination is already available through the West Midlands Advisory Council for Technical, Commercial and Art Education and the evidence is that it has worked well over many years. In the light of these arrangements and of the general weight of opinion against splitting the education service we concluded that there was a strong case against setting up any new authority for technical education in the special review area alone.

Highways, Police and Other Services

86. Other services we considered were the construction and maintenance of main highways and the police, fire and ambulance services. We received no evidence of any particular problems which would call for unification of these services over all or part of the conurbation. On the other hand they are all services in which technical considerations are of such importance that in a continuous urban area there is a *prima facie* case for unified administration in the interests of technical efficiency and administrative economy. We thought that the need for such unification was very greatly lessened in this conurbation because practically half of it was already under the administration of a single authority—Birmingham. Our conclusion therefore was that while there was a case for giving the administration of these services to a continuous county, if it was necessary to create one for other purposes, they would not in themselves justify the creation of a continuous county.

Planning

87. Of all the functions suggested for the continuous county planning was clearly in a class by itself; and we think that those who advocated a continuous county would agree with this. We use the term "planning" in its widest sense to include provision for overspill and also the planning of main highways and traffic control. The case for a continuous county in the West Midlands virtually stands or falls on the need to co-ordinate planning in this sense over all or most of the conurbation. For, as we have shown, the degree of benefit to be expected in other services would not be sufficient to call for the creation of an entirely new organisation.

88. The case for a single authority for planning and traffic in the conurbation can be summarised as follows:

- (i) Land in the special review area is extremely scarce and is becoming scarcer. It is therefore sensible to have a single authority to control the use of this scarce commodity and to see that it is used to the best advantage and with proper regard for priorities.
- (ii) Planning decisions affecting one part of a conurbation can easily affect any other part of it. It is therefore an advantage to have a single plan which will cater for the needs of the whole area. A single authority could also ensure uniform administration of the plan and make sure that all the problems of the area were looked at together.
- (iii) A single authority would be able to employ the best-qualified technical staff, with a full supporting team of technical experts which smaller authorities would not find it economic to provide. Thus the quality of planning would be improved at a time when the authorities would be facing many new tasks of great complexity in urban renewal.

- (iv) So far as traffic and highways are concerned, apart from the ability to employ specialist staff, a single authority could look at the problems of traffic flow over the whole area, ensure that action taken in one part of it to deal with traffic problems did not aggravate conditions in other parts and undertake research and experiments.
- (v) As we indicate in Chapter 12, we are convinced that there is an overspill problem which can only be dealt with by unified action covering both Birmingham and the Black Country. A single authority would be able to take such action in dealing with what is probably the most pressing planning problem of the special review area.

Local Considerations

89. These arguments in favour of a single authority are general arguments which apply *prima facie* to all conurbations. Although Birmingham and the Black Country have many similar problems of slum clearance and redevelopment we received little or no evidence of problems in their internal planning and development which would demand a common solution over the whole or most of the special review area. There were also weighty local factors which ran counter to the general arguments in favour of a continuous county.

90. The most important of these local factors is that Birmingham is too large to go undivided into a continuous county and it is impracticable to divide it. We have already explained our general reasons for not dividing Birmingham and these would apply in large measure to division within a continuous county. On the other hand inclusion of Birmingham as a single unit with half the population of the county was seen as a disadvantage by the other authorities, since they thought that the Birmingham representatives would be bound to dominate the county council. The inclusion of Birmingham would also affect the allocation of powers between the upper and lower tiers in the county. It would hardly be practicable to give Birmingham with its million population no greater powers than an authority with 100,000 or perhaps even less; on the other hand, the more adjustments of this kind were made to recognise the differences in population between the lower-tier authorities, the more conflicting and confusing would local government in the area become.

91. Other local factors which we considered material were:

- (i) Birmingham can ensure for practically half the special review area any co-ordination which is required and it is large enough to employ high-level professional staff and the various supporting technical services.
- (ii) In the Black Country, which comprises most of the rest of the conurbation, the pattern of development is such that the area can be grouped around a few major focal centres. The groups so formed could in large measure be planned as separate units. In so far as there were problems of planning which could not be handled by such units within their own areas, they would be mainly either problems arising on the boundaries between units, which could be settled by co-operation between the authorities concerned, or problems, such as overspill, the solution of which would require action outside the conurbation itself.
- (iii) So far as traffic control (including questions of parking, traffic restrictions and so on) is concerned, it would be going too far to say that what happens in one part of the special review area cannot affect what happens

in another. But again there are special features. In the first place the worst congestion is in the centre of Birmingham where the problem can be dealt with by measures which do not extend beyond the boundaries of the county borough. Secondly the Black Country is not like the London area where frequently roads change little in character between adjacent boroughs. The main centres of the Black Country are generally separated from one another by lengths of road which are not so heavily trafficked. To a large extent therefore the problems of each of these centres can be solved separately and the need for measures covering more than one authority's area is likely to occur only exceptionally. Any such cases, as with planning, could be dealt with by collaboration between the authorities concerned.

- (iv) The main planning problem of the conurbation, and the one problem which seriously affects both Birmingham and the Black Country, is overspill. In the circumstances of the West Midlands this must go into new and expanded towns beyond the green belt, so that reception of overspill is not a problem which could be solved by setting up a continuous county for the conurbation. The more limited problem of co-ordinating the arrangements at the exporting end could, as we suggest in Chapter 12, be adequately dealt with by a joint board of the exporting authorities.

A Continuous County for the Black Country

92. We therefore came to the conclusion that a continuous county for the whole special review area, including Birmingham, would not be justified. But we felt we should also consider the possibility of a continuous county for the Black Country alone.

93. The advantages which such an organisation might bring would be the possibility of a single planning authority for the Black Country and unified administration for certain services; it would also be possible for planning and some other services to ignore a large number of boundaries running across built-up areas and thus to recognise the continuity of development in the Black Country. On the other hand, there were these arguments against it:

- (i) the most important problems which we felt needed a wider area of administration were those which could not be solved within the Black Country alone. Overspill is a problem which affects Birmingham even more than the Black Country and there would be little point in having a continuous county for the Black Country dealing with overspill if it would then have to join in some common organisation with Birmingham. Similarly, sewage disposal is another problem which needs a wider authority. But Birmingham, as the composition of the Birmingham, Tame and Rea Drainage Board shows, is involved in this too. There would be no point in having a continuous county to deal with sewage disposal if it were limited to the Black Country.
- (ii) Because of the way in which the Black Country has developed around four or five main centres, its planning could for most purposes be considered within the framework of a limited number of clearly defined county borough areas; and the case for a single authority to prepare a comprehensive plan is therefore not of decisive importance.

(iii) It would mean drastic alteration of the existing pattern of county districts. We mention this because those districts who were prepared at least to consider a continuous county for the Black Country were probably influenced by the feeling that it would be possible to keep most of the present districts as lower-tier authorities in the new county. We looked carefully into this but we came to the conclusion that in order to give direct responsibility for most of the personal services to the lower-tier authorities it would be essential to have authorities at least approaching the minimum size for a new county borough (100,000). Anything smaller would mean splitting the powers or having delegation on a substantial scale from the upper to the lower tier.

Conclusions

94. We found that, although a substantial argument could be adduced in favour of a continuous county, it was not conclusive; and it was outweighed by the practical difficulty of incorporating Birmingham into such a county and by the practical advantages of a county borough pattern in the Black Country. It is true that a number of separate county boroughs would lack a formal structure for co-ordination and provision of common services which a continuous county could provide. But, because of the local circumstances of the area, there would be a reasonable amount of self-sufficiency within each county borough and they would not be too numerous to co-operate. The most important common problems are overspill and sewage disposal and for these alternative and less drastic measures are available in the use of joint boards. Above all, there is the fact that a single county borough, which is the largest all-purpose authority in the country, covers nearly the whole of the eastern half of the special review area.

95. Because of these local circumstances and the extent to which the objectives that could be secured by a continuous county could also be achieved with less disturbance by a county borough pattern, we decided that we ought to prefer the latter solution in this special review area. But, in doing so, we had in mind only the local circumstances of the West Midlands; and this decision therefore does not establish a precedent for any other special review area.

Chapter 6

Our Draft Proposals

96. In the two preceding chapters we have, for ease of exposition, set out separately three possible solutions to the problems of the area. We did not, of course, consider them at different stages in water-tight compartments. We examined them side by side as part of a continuous process, comparing the advantages and disadvantages of each with the others. As a result of this consideration we were able to frame our draft proposals.

97. The Act requires us to prepare draft proposals which must be sent to all the local authorities and other bodies we have consulted, and to confer with any of those authorities and bodies who wish for further discussion before we submit our final proposals and report.

98. Before issuing draft proposals, we gave notice that, subject to consultations with the local authorities concerned and any direction from the Minister, we proposed to treat as part of the special review area certain areas on its periphery. We took this action under Section 25(2) so as to allow scope in our draft proposals for such adjustments as might be desirable to rectify minor boundary problems. Initially, we took a zone round the outer boundary of the special review area—generally 880 yards wide, 1300 yards wide in one case, and elsewhere selected small areas. As a result of our consultations with local authorities, however, we felt able substantially to reduce this peripheral area and we give details in Part II of Appendix 5 of the areas which were eventually treated as part of the special review area.

99. Our draft proposals were the result of considering the written submissions of the local authorities and others and what we were told in the course of our many discussions, as well as what we had seen and analysed for ourselves. We had little doubt that our diagnosis of the underlying problems of the area was broadly right, but there was obviously room for differences of opinion about the best way of solving them. The Act clearly intends draft proposals to be provisional and open to amendment in the light of further discussion. We therefore thought that it would be wrong, in setting out our draft proposals, to make the statement of reasons so detailed as to be in effect a draft of our final report. We confined ourselves to a brief statement which we hoped would make clear the main considerations we had in mind without depriving the local authorities of their freedom of argument or ourselves of the opportunity to reconsider our proposals if it were shown that these could be improved.

100. For the Black Country we proposed five county boroughs. We thought that the result would be more effective and more convenient local government for the area as a whole because:—

- (i) With populations ranging from 150,000 to 250,000 the authorities would all be large enough to provide comprehensive and effective services and to carry out the major tasks facing local government in this area.

- (ii) The areas of the authorities would not be too big for convenience and would match the basic economic and social structure.
- (iii) The grouping of the area into five county boroughs would avoid the need for delegation and remove the main defects of the present structure.
- (iv) The number of authorities would be small enough to make co-operation practicable.

101. So far as the remainder of the area was concerned, we proposed no major change except that Solihull should become a county borough. Consideration of Birmingham's claim to extension in the Wythall area was deferred until the Minister's decision on the planning appeal was known. In considering the detailed boundaries we aimed at leaving control of green belt land with the county councils wherever this was compatible with getting a good line. It was for this reason that we decided to take a large area of green belt out of Solihull and leave it in Warwickshire. We also tried, where local communities seemed to us to be split by existing boundaries, to bring them together within one administrative area. Thus we proposed to remove the World's End district of Quinton from Birmingham and put it in the county borough based on Smethwick, to include with West Bromwich the parts of the Great Barr area in Aldridge and Birmingham, and to put the Pheasey area of Aldridge into Birmingham.

102. We proposed a special authority to deal with overspill problems because it was clear to us, after examining estimates of the rate at which available land was likely to be used up, that Birmingham and the proposed Black Country county boroughs would have a continuing need to "overspill" beyond the green belt. We also made recommendations regarding sewage disposal in the area.

103. Our draft proposals consisted of a written statement and a series of 2½ maps showing detailed boundaries. For convenience we summarise them here as follows:

- (i) Most of the Black Country to be reorganised into five county boroughs comprising:
 - (a) Dudley county borough, Brierley Hill urban district and most of Sedgley and part of Coseley urban districts.
 - (b) Smethwick county borough and the boroughs of Halesowen, Oldbury and Rowley Regis.
 - (c) Walsall county borough, most of Willenhall and part of Darlaston urban districts.
 - (d) West Bromwich county borough, Tipton and Wednesbury boroughs, most of Darlaston and part of Coseley urban districts.
 - (e) Wolverhampton county borough, Bilston borough, Wednesfield urban district and parts of Coseley, Sedgley, Tettenhall and Willenhall urban districts.
- (ii) On the eastern side of the area to make only local boundary adjustments to Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield but to create Solihull, subject to alteration in area, a county borough.
- (iii) Stourbridge borough and Amblecote urban district to be amalgamated and constituted as a non-county borough in Worcestershire.

- (iv) Aldridge and Brownhills urban districts to be amalgamated (subject to some alteration of their areas) and constituted as an urban district in Staffordshire.
- (v) A special authority for Birmingham and the five Black Country county boroughs to be set up to deal with "overspill" problems; this would take the form of a joint board.
- (vi) A single sewage disposal board to be set up for each of the two main drainage basins—the Tame and the Upper Stour.

Reactions to the Draft Proposals

104. All the local authorities concerned made written representations on our draft proposals and so did many interested bodies, including not only the bodies whom we had ourselves consulted at the beginning of our review but also a great variety of local associations and clubs (see Appendix 10). We also received several petitions, with a total of more than 47,000 signatures, and nearly 2,000 letters from individuals and firms. We think it fair to say that most of those who wrote to us or signed petitions were moved by an instinctive reluctance to change what they were used to. The biggest of the petitions were the 7,000 signatures against taking the World's End area of Quinton out of Birmingham, the 13,000 against putting Halesowen into a county borough and the 16,000 against any interference with Bilston, most of the latter being chiefly concerned with the fear that in a county borough Bilston's market might decline or be abolished. The most letters on one subject were the 764 protesting against the inclusion of Halesowen in a county borough. In some areas it appeared that many of those who sent individual letters also signed petitions.

105. Our proposals for the Black Country got a mixed reception, but there was little dispute over the rest of the proposals except on matters of detail. Birmingham were not entirely happy about the proposal to transfer parts of their area to the new county boroughs. They were also unenthusiastic about the proposed joint board for overspill, but thought that if it were set up the receiving counties should be represented on it. Warwickshire did not oppose the proposal to make Solihull a county borough, so long as it did not take effect before 1st April, 1964. Staffordshire and the two district councils supported the amalgamation of Aldridge and Brownhills; and Staffordshire were the only authority to oppose the amalgamation of Stourbridge and Amblecote.

106. The division of opinion in the Black Country followed expected lines. The county boroughs welcomed the proposals in their entirety, except that Walsall now asked for the inclusion in their area of Aldridge and Brownhills. Staffordshire were supported by all the county districts except Rowley Regis in opposing the division of the Black Country into county boroughs and put forward the revised scheme for reorganising the Black Country districts which we have already dealt with in Chapter 4 (see p.24). Worcestershire were prepared to see Oldbury join with Smethwick and Rowley Regis to form a new county borough but strongly resisted the absorption of Halesowen, as did the Halesowen Borough Council.

Chapter 7

The Statutory Conferences

107. We fulfilled our statutory obligation to confer with the local authorities and other bodies concerned by holding one conference in Birmingham, dealing mainly with the eastern half of the review area, and another in Wolverhampton to discuss the affairs of the Black Country and our proposals for dealing with the general problems of overspill and sewage disposal.

108. We should like to take this opportunity of putting on record our thanks to the Birmingham and Wolverhampton councils, who provided the accommodation for the conferences and whose officers gave us such willing help in making the arrangements.

THE BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE

109. The conference in Birmingham was attended by 119 representatives of 37 local authorities and other bodies (see Appendix 11). The areas discussed were Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield, Stourbridge and Amblecote, and Aldridge and Brownhills. The main proposals—to make Solihull a county borough and to amalgamate Stourbridge with Amblecote and Aldridge with Brownhills—were not in dispute and the discussion was largely concerned with details.

110. There was vigorous dispute about some of the more substantial boundary changes, particularly those affecting the proposed new urban district of Aldridge and Brownhills, and a marked tendency for the authorities to find that our proposals were eminently sound when they were gaining territory but unsound when they were losing it. Thus the Aldridge Urban District Council, the Aldridge Society and the Pheasey Residents' Association objected to our view that Pheasey at the southern tip of Aldridge should go with the Queslett Road area of Birmingham; and at the northern end of the new district Brownhills Urban District Council did not want to lose the village of Norton Canes. On the other hand Sutton Coldfield Borough Council, strongly supported by Warwickshire County Council, thought that we ought to have met their claim to the Streetly area of Aldridge while Staffordshire County Council and Aldridge agreed with our draft proposals for this area. There were also opposing views about inclusion in a county borough. Bromsgrove Rural District Council and the parishes concerned felt strongly about our proposals to include suburban housing at Cofton Common and West Heath in Birmingham. The Shirley South Boundaries Preservation Committee preferred to stay in the new county borough of Solihull rather than be left in Warwickshire as part of a rural district.

THE WOLVERHAMPTON CONFERENCE

111. There were 172 representatives of 63 local authorities and other bodies at the Wolverhampton conference (see Appendix 12). Two days were spent discussing the draft proposals in relation to the general problems of the area, a day

and a half on the details of the proposed five county boroughs and half a day on the problems of overspill and sewage disposal. The verbatim report of the proceedings runs to 467 pages of foolscap and about 130,000 words.

112. Staffordshire County Council and most of the Staffordshire district councils opposed the draft proposals and supported the county's revised proposals for reorganisation; the county boroughs, with Oldbury and Rowley Regis boroughs, were in favour of the draft proposals. Staffordshire and Wolverhampton were the leading spokesmen for the two points of view. Both authorities were represented by speakers who put their case clearly, fully and fairly, and we think all who were present would accept that the opinions of these two authorities on the main issues were representative of all the authorities and interested bodies who agreed with them. The conference was, we believe, of great value to the authorities. It was certainly of the greatest assistance to us.

The County View

113. Staffordshire agreed with us in wanting the counties to be in control of the green belt and in rejecting the idea of a continuous county, but were opposed to a county borough solution for the Black Country. They felt that the grouping of so many authorities into five large units was the negation of "local" government. The people in the districts would lose, because local characteristics and local enthusiasm would be swamped in the larger units; they would have fewer council representatives and the services would be less accessible. The effect on the county would be to reduce the population from over 900,000 to about 600,000; this would mean a deterioration in the scope and quality of their services, and as a largely rural county their enthusiasm for tackling the conurbation's overspill problem would inevitably diminish. With the possible exception of Dudley, the county boroughs were large enough to be fully effective as they were. There was no virtue in mere size; in fact the enlarged county boroughs would have too much to do, the added areas would be treated as fringe areas and their redevelopment would proceed more slowly than if they remained as county districts able to rely on technical help from the county. The heart of the conurbation, where controlled redevelopment was most needed, was where all the new boundaries met and where co-ordination would be most difficult. At present the county served as a co-ordinating agency in the Black Country and between it and the rest of Staffordshire.

114. The county council did not accept that the social and economic life of the area was centred on the county boroughs, particularly as regards West Bromwich and Smethwick. They thought that the county boroughs had supported the draft proposals because they were concerned in the main to preserve their own status. But they said there was no agreement about what the new county borough areas should be—Wolverhampton wanted to recover their own overspill population to avoid population decline; Smethwick wanted room for development; Dudley wanted land for open space; Walsall were prepared to accept anything offered and West Bromwich really wanted to remain undisturbed.

115. On the other hand it was asserted by the county council that their revised proposals would preserve what was good in the present system while strengthening the lower-tier units by amalgamations which were in the main acceptable to the authorities concerned. The new districts would have sufficient population to claim delegation as a right. The county were entirely in favour of delegation: the

Act of 1958 fortified and confirmed it as part of the local government system and it was a mistake to suggest that it was something to be avoided. In contrast to the draft proposals Staffordshire's revised scheme had the additional merit, in their eyes, of not being irrevocable, but a possible half-way house to a continuous county or county borough pattern should their scheme after all not prove satisfactory in practice.

116. Of the Staffordshire county districts only Rowley Regis, which favoured a single-tier administration, and Wednesfield, which wanted to be left alone in a two-tier system, opposed the county's scheme. Nevertheless it became apparent during the conference that some of the districts, for example Coseley and Tipton, would really prefer to remain as they are, while others, like Wednesbury and Darlaston, would prefer a county borough if they could be at the centre of it. Bilston said that if the Commission insisted on a pattern of county boroughs they would be prepared to consider a central Black Country county borough which would include Wednesbury and Darlaston. Most of the districts seemed to be particularly worried by the possibility that as suburbs of a county borough they would be neglected. The Heath Town district of Wolverhampton was mentioned more than once as an example of such neglect. It was also said that development companies would no longer be interested in redevelopment of the smaller town centres in the Black Country if they ceased to be administrative centres and no longer had their own town halls or council offices.

The County Borough View

117. The supporters of a one-tier system agreed with Wolverhampton that the five county boroughs would form a strong coherent system easily understood by the public, effective because the new authorities would have resources concentrated within the Black Country to deal with all local government functions, and convenient because each unit would be compact and with a good centre which would have close affinity with the outlying areas. At present the Black Country suffered from the weaknesses of division, with its resources diffused and partly absorbed into the county areas outside. Yet there was nothing in common between two-thirds of Staffordshire and the Black Country county districts. This and the fact that the county town was 15-20 miles away from the Black Country made the county council's administration remote and led to delays; delegation was appropriate in areas where the two-tier system was necessary, but it had no intrinsic value and was a poor substitute for direct responsibility. Staffordshire did not co-ordinate the activities of the county boroughs in the Black Country nor did they co-ordinate the lower-tier activities of the county districts. Co-ordination in the area was bound to be simpler with five local authorities roughly equal in size and resources than it was now, or would be under the county scheme, which would still leave the area divided between five county boroughs, two counties and numerous county districts. If the wishes of the inhabitants were to be considered, then the authorities favouring one-tier government argued that, as the elected representatives of areas with more than half the population of the Black Country, they spoke for the majority of the inhabitants in advocating a county borough solution.

118. It was illogical for the county to criticise the proposed new county boroughs as being too large and remote and at the same time to assert that the county council with a population of 900,000 was a more effective authority than the

existing county boroughs because of its greater size and resources. If the county were concerned with good local government for the area as a whole they should either be prepared to see the county boroughs enlarged or ask for them to be absorbed in the two-tier system. The truth was that Staffordshire dare not take their own arguments to their logical conclusion because they knew that a two-tier system throughout the Black Country would have no place in it for a Staffordshire County Council with more than half of its population outside the conurbation. The Staffordshire districts in the Black Country had far more in common with the county boroughs than they had with the rest of the county.

119. The county borough spokesman regarded as unreal the fears expressed by the districts about redevelopment of their centres or the future of Bilston market. Private enterprise would develop where it was profitable to do so and the presence or absence of district council offices would make little or no difference to commercial prospects. The new county boroughs would be concerned to do the best for their areas as a whole. The added areas would be strongly represented in the new councils and the inhabitants would have a much bigger say than now in control of the county services, which absorbed more than two-thirds of the rate income raised by the district councils.

Other Views

120. Worcestershire County Council had no observations on the draft proposals except where they affected Worcestershire; they doubted whether the proposed county borough incorporating Smethwick was the right grouping but they were prepared to see Oldbury linked with Smethwick in a county borough; they were however strongly opposed to losing Halesowen from the county. Halesowen stressed what they had said in their written representations about the absence of affinity with the rest of the proposed new county borough, which they asserted would be a satisfactory unit without Halesowen.

121. Other authorities reiterated their written representations on individual areas. Walsall asked for Aldridge and Brownhills to be added to the proposed county borough incorporating Walsall. Darlaston objected to being linked with West Bromwich and even more to being divided, with the Bentley and Moxley housing estates going to other local authority areas. Willenhall said they had no links with Walsall but that there were close ties between the Portobello area and the rest of Willenhall. Sedgley felt strongly that the Goldthorn Park estate was an integral part of the urban district and should not be detached from the rest to be put with Wolverhampton. Birmingham, strongly supported by local residents' associations in each case, objected to the draft proposals for Great Barr and Quinton.

122. The local organisations of the political parties who attended the conference were united in considering the proposed county boroughs too large. The West Midlands Regional Council of the Labour Party favoured a continuous county with lower-tier units of about 100,000 population, the West Midlands Communist Party District Committee suggested a regional upper-tier authority with lower-tier units of 60-100,000 population, while the West Midlands Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations wanted to retain the existing structure much in its present form.

123. The views of the conference on the draft proposals for overspill and sewage disposal are dealt with in Chapters 12 and 13.

Chapter 8

The Basis of Our Final Proposals

124. We devoted a great deal of time before and after the conference to studying the observations, objections and counter-proposals of the local authorities and other bodies. We did not feel committed to our draft proposals. Indeed one of our reasons for putting them fairly shortly was, as we have said, to emphasise their provisional nature and to give us the opportunity to change our minds if this was shown to be desirable. We reviewed the draft proposals in the light of all that had been put to us.

125. Only one new major factor emerged from the draft proposal and conference stage. That was Staffordshire's Scheme B which, for convenience, we have already discussed in Chapter 4. We considered this very carefully before coming to the conclusion that it did not materially alter our earlier views of the needs of this area and the relative advantages of the various solutions, and much of our reconsideration of the whole problem was concerned with a detailed comparison of Staffordshire's ideas with our provisional proposals.

126. In the end we decided that the right solution for the greater part of this area was on the broad lines of our draft proposals, but as a result of the representations made to us we now propose certain alterations in detail. The most important of these changes are:—

- (a) to exclude the greater part of Halesowen from the county borough based on Smethwick;
- (b) to include virtually the whole of Darlaston in the county borough based on Walsall;
- (c) to give up the proposals for changes affecting the Quinton and Perry Barr areas of Birmingham and the Pheasey area of Aldridge.

The reasons for these changes, and for a number of other alterations, are given in the following chapters which explain the composition and boundaries of our proposed authorities.

127. Our proposals are set out in summary form at the end of this report. In this chapter, we give our reasons for adopting the county borough pattern and, in particular, why we think this would be better than the proposals submitted by Staffordshire County Council.

GENERAL ADVANTAGES OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH SOLUTION

128. We have already made clear our general view that the Black Country groups itself more or less naturally round the five county boroughs. They are the main shopping and social centres for the areas around them and three of them (Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton) run buses into the surrounding districts. Each is also a primary focus of interest for sport, for entertainment, for higher education and for many other purposes. Map D, which shows the

main road network, together with the distribution of shopping and commercial centres and of certain major focal points of entertainment and sport, illustrates this and shows the extent to which our proposed county borough solution has been built around the dominant urban centres.

129. Staffordshire County Council's main arguments at the Wolverhampton conference against the county borough pattern amounted to saying:—

- (i) The county boroughs are all right as they are; they have enough to do in dealing with their own problems of urban renewal. If they are enlarged the additional problems of urban renewal in the added areas will produce a situation beyond the capacity of a single authority; and yet they will still be too small to run the county services (particularly education, health and welfare) as well as the county council could.
- (ii) Local loyalties would be swamped in the county boroughs and the local people would have less control over the services than they have in a two-tier system.
- (iii) The added areas would be neglected.
- (iv) There would still be a multiplicity of local authorities in the area and the co-ordination now exercised by the county would be lost.

130. We have great respect for Staffordshire's achievement as a county and we appreciate the fair and courteous way in which the county council have behaved in the course of our review. But their attitude is fundamentally defensive. The county exists; therefore it must be preserved as it is. We are required to look at the problems of the special review area as a whole but Staffordshire, not unnaturally, have primarily considered our proposals from the point of view of advantage or disadvantage to the county as it is, without taking into account the possible advantages to the county boroughs or the benefits to the county districts that might flow from integration with the county boroughs. This has led them to minimise the links which exist between the county boroughs and the county districts in the Black Country and to disregard the extent to which a solution of the problems of the one must affect the other. They touched on this point at the conference when they criticised some of the county boroughs for their interest in the neighbouring districts (see Chapter 7, paragraph 114), only to shy away from the logic of the argument, which is that proper organisation of the Black Country is only possible if county boroughs and county districts are brought together in partnership.

One-tier and Two-tier Local Government

131. Staffordshire were in essence advancing a general argument for the superiority of the two-tier system over the all-purpose authority. For if authorities of the size we propose for urban areas in the Black Country, with populations of 150,000 to 250,000, do not make a suitable compromise between the demands of effectiveness and convenience then the whole county borough concept would stand condemned. However, we did not feel called upon to make any comparison in the abstract between the two systems. The local authority Associations have agreed that "the present system of local government is one-tier administration in the large cities and towns and, in the administrative counties, two-tier in the smaller towns and three-tier in the rural districts".⁽¹⁾ In the Black Country the

⁽¹⁾ White Paper on Areas and Status of Local Authorities, Appendix, paragraph 1.

crux of the matter is that Staffordshire wanted to treat the districts as if they were a number of separate county towns instead of parts of a continuous urban area. But the realistic view of these districts is that, as a result of the development which has taken place and the obliteration of existing boundaries, they are now in spite of their separate origins inextricably linked with the county boroughs rather than completely independent towns. On that view there can be no doubt that a county borough pattern is the solution to the problems of the Black Country as a whole which gives the best balance between effectiveness and convenience, between administrative efficiency and local interest.

132. In defending the application of the two-tier system to the Black Country Staffordshire objected to any criticism of delegation. They said that the Act of 1958 had confirmed it as part of the local government system and that it was monstrous to suggest that delegation was something to be avoided. Indeed they and many of the district councils suggested that in a county borough organisation the people of the districts would have less control over their services because they would be represented by fewer county borough councillors than the present total of county and county district councillors for the area. So far as the districts at any rate are concerned, this is an argument which springs from a fundamental misconception of the councillor's role in local government. On the average about two-thirds of the money raised in rates by the district councils in Staffordshire is spent on county services; some, but not all, of the county services can be delegated to the districts under schemes which give them a limited control of the day-to-day administration. Effective control of policy and finance—and therefore of the scope and standard of the services—lies with the county council, on which the total representation of the Black Country is barely one-third of the total membership. There can be little doubt that in the circumstances of the Black Country the people in the present district areas would have more complete and effective local control of these services as part of a county borough than they could have under any scheme of delegation as part of the county.

Developing Services

133. Many of the district councillors we met in the course of the review emphasised their value as intermediaries between the county council and the people for whom the county services are provided, able to guide the ordinary man and woman through the complexities of the county administration, to investigate complaints and to prevent the members and officers of the county council from becoming too remote from the people. It is of course part of any councillor's duty to be in touch with the people he represents and to reflect their wishes. But the value of such contact is related to the ability of the councillor to translate wishes into action; and the contribution he can make to improving the services is likely to be greater if he is a member of an authority responsible for determining policy and standards than if he is a member of an authority which has no direct and independent control over these matters. The accessibility of the district councillor provides no argument for retaining a district council structure in the Black Country unless the district councils have a worthwhile contribution to make to the needs and problems of the area.

134. In most of the Black Country both the geography of the area and the social and other affinities support a county borough solution. It is our view in these

circumstances that the contribution which the district councils would be able to make in the future, even if reorganised as Staffordshire propose, does not bear comparison with what would be possible if they were combined with the county boroughs. Some of the services which are of growing importance today and in which there is the greatest need for new thinking on the part of the local authorities are the responsibility of county and county borough councils—education, health, welfare and the other social services. As authorities exercising delegated powers the district councils in the Black Country would have only a limited part to play in policy for the development of these services. Of the powers which the district councils exercise in their own right the most important in the circumstances of the Black Country are those needed for urban renewal; this is the major task of physical development now facing the districts and the county boroughs. We have given our reasons in Chapter 3 for thinking that the district councils would not be able to tackle it on their own with the vigour and imagination and on the scale that would be required. We met a number of able men among the members of the Black Country district councils, but there are not enough of them. The districts, generally speaking, in the West Midlands Special Review Area find it difficult to attract enough of the best men into their service, whether as members or as officers, and one of the main reasons for this is their smallness and the restricted field within which they operate. Our proposals would give the able members among them greater scope for policy making and would do more than Staffordshire's proposals to ensure that the staff engaged in local government services throughout the Black Country were of high quality.

Local Loyalties

135. The changes we propose would of course affect loyalties that have been built up in the past. But these loyalties are often not primarily to the administrative unit and their survival is not incompatible with the development of a wider loyalty to the new county boroughs. It would be wrong in any case to think of our proposals as a county borough take-over. The added areas are so great, as the following table shows, that the resulting county boroughs can more truly be regarded as new creations. In no case would the existing county borough's population amount to more than two-thirds of the proposed new authority, and so far as both Dudley and Smethwick are concerned, their existing population would be in a decided minority.

ESTIMATED POPULATIONS

<i>Existing C.B.</i>	<i>Proposed C.B.</i>	<i>Existing population as a percentage of proposed</i>
Dudley	64,000	40
Smethwick	71,000	38
Walsall	115,000	66
West Bromwich	94,000	55
Wolverhampton	145,000	58

We are advised that under the statute all the areas except the county borough incorporating Smethwick must be treated (for purposes of the Minister's order setting them up) as an extension of the existing county borough. But this

technical consideration should not prevent the members of the new authorities from approaching their work with a spirit of partnership and treating all parts of the area on an equal footing.

136. We have asked ourselves whether the disappearance of the districts from the heart of the Black Country is right. Nothing is ever changed without regret or loss and we have respected the district representatives from this area for their sturdy independence and determination. But the local element they represent in the present structure would not be lost in the new pattern and the partnership between the people of the districts and of the county boroughs in an effective and self-governing structure would, we believe, on balance far outweigh anything that might be lost in the transition. Too high a price is being paid by the area as a whole for the retention of the individual districts.

137. Our proposals would also bring benefits to the county boroughs, but we think it is important not to look at the proposals in the context of the sterile conflict between counties and county boroughs which has developed in some parts of the country. What is of benefit to a county borough is often of benefit to the inhabitants of the surrounding area as well. For instance, in the Black Country it is certain that, whatever improvement there is in the district centres, the town centres of the county boroughs will continue to grow and that increasing numbers of people will want to visit them. An improvement in the appearance and layout of these town centres and in the amenities which they have to offer would be a gain to all the people around. Our proposals, by concentrating the resources of the Black Country and making possible a rational allocation of land between the central areas and the less congested outer districts, would confer a general benefit on the inhabitants of the Black Country as a whole. We think too it would be of benefit to both if the principal and subsidiary centres were planned together so that each played its proper part to the best advantage.

Co-ordination

138. It can be said that the county borough solution would provide no machinery for dealing with problems which need to be looked at over a wider area. We thought about this a great deal. We have discussed in Chapter 5 the problems which may affect the review area as a whole and we give our proposals for dealing with overspill and sewage disposal in Chapters 12 and 13. As regards the internal planning of the new county boroughs we are satisfied that our proposals would produce more realistic planning than would be possible if we left a mixture of county boroughs and county districts. Staffordshire's claim to co-ordinate the Black Country is misconceived. It is true they have produced a plan for the county which caters for overspill from the Black Country county boroughs, but apart from consultation about fringe problems they can do nothing to co-ordinate planning in the county boroughs or in the Worcestershire part of the Black Country, nor are the county districts in any sense under the surveillance of the county council in carrying out their district functions. Difficulties of co-ordination are much less likely to arise, and if they do are likely to be much more easily settled, between the five county boroughs, two counties and nine county districts which would remain even after Staffordshire's reorganisation.

Summary of Advantages

139. Taking everything into account we are satisfied that the advantages of our proposals would far outweigh the disadvantages for the following reasons :

- (i) Direct control of the county services would be brought much closer to the local population, without the need for delegation or arrangements for decentralisation. Since the centre of a county borough would not be, at most, more than five miles from the outskirts, meetings could easily be attended. All councillors could reasonably be expected to know, or get to know, the circumstances of any part of their area; and thus decisions, whether on priorities or the merits of individual cases, could be taken in the light of local knowledge of all the possible choices.
- (ii) The administration of the district services would be entrusted to an authority whose resources, on any standard, would be adequate for those services; and the experience already obtained by some, at least, of the present county boroughs in facing the complex problems of urban renewal could be available throughout the area of the new county borough.
- (iii) The administration of virtually all local services would be in the hands of a single authority. This would make co-operation easier, for example, between the housing, welfare and local health services, and make it easier to arrange joint schemes, such as those for old people's housing with help from welfare sources.
- (iv) A county borough pattern would replace the present multiplicity of authorities of different kinds by a few all-purpose authorities. This would mean a local government structure which people could much more easily understand and under which they could more readily find their way to the services they want. It should also provide units with a better balance of social and economic composition and with a more even distribution than at present of the scarce resources of developable land.

Chapter 9

The New County Boroughs in the Black Country

140. In this chapter we explain how, having decided on a county borough pattern, we worked out the composition of our proposed county boroughs (see figure 6 and Map A). We deal here with the broad principles and the way in which we grouped the existing county boroughs and districts, reserving more detailed points on boundaries for Chapter 11 and Appendix 14.

141. Map B serves to illustrate many of the points made in this and the following chapter. It shows the extent of existing development, together with expected development in the foreseeable future, throughout the special review area and indicates the relationship of the green belt to the land in urban use. Information about land in urban use is derived from the development plans of the local authorities, but for our purpose it is shown under three broad categories only—substantially built-up areas, open land, and an intermediate category of urban land uses in which neither buildings nor open land predominate. This pattern of development has been shown against a background of both the existing and proposed local authority boundaries.

142. It must of course be obvious that there are no perfect solutions for the problems of local government. The ideal area for one service is not ideal for another; there is a continual push and pull between effectiveness and convenience; only very rarely do all the facts of a situation conform to a single tidy pattern. So it is in the Black Country. The general tendency of the districts to group themselves with the county boroughs is clear enough and in the main the composition of the new county borough areas was dictated by the facts as we found them. Where there was room for differences of opinion over the details and over the weight which should be given to various factors, our general approach was as follows:—

- (a) Preferably the boroughs should be of about the same size, for we felt that co-operation between them would be easier if they met as equals. We prescribe no ideal size for a county borough but in this area we thought that, having regard to the distribution and density of the population, county boroughs of the range of 150,000 to 250,000 population would be about right, since they would be large enough to provide a fairly differentiated professional staff and a variety of institutions, yet not so large that the administration would become complex and remote.
- (b) Where the local councils have wanted their districts amalgamated to form a county borough we have tried to meet their wishes. Conversely, we have not broken up existing districts unless there have been very strong reasons for doing so.
- (c) When we came to the borders of the Black Country, we did not try to fit every district into a county borough. We have, however, had one guiding principle here; as we have already indicated, we think that in general

county councils rather than county borough councils are the better guardians of the green belt, and we have therefore drawn the boundaries of the new county boroughs to include as little green belt land as possible.

Local Authority Suggestions

143. It follows that we have not felt able to adopt in its entirety any one of the county borough schemes submitted to us. The four county borough scheme proposed by Wolverhampton and West Bromwich county borough councils would admittedly have produced units of a suitable size. But the proposed West Bromwich/Smethwick county borough—stretching from Great Barr to Halesowen—seemed to lack community of interest and took no account of the express desire of Smethwick, Oldbury and Rowley Regis to join together as a county borough. This scheme also involved more splitting of existing districts than we thought necessary. The seven county borough scheme proposed by Dudley County Borough Council and (in a slightly different form) by Wednesbury and Darlaston urban district councils aimed at producing smaller units. It took some account of the wishes of the Smethwick group, but made drastic division of districts like Rowley Regis and Tipton which we have been able to keep virtually intact and brought in other districts like Aldridge, Brownhills and Stourbridge which we think would be better left in the counties. The rest of the unit based on Stourbridge would not have been viable by itself and the amalgamation of the districts at the core of the Black Country—Bilston, Darlaston, Wednesbury and Willenhall—would have produced a weak unit.

144. After the conference at Wolverhampton we looked again at the possibility of making a county borough out of these districts, since it appeared that, although Wednesbury and Darlaston supported Staffordshire County Council's revised scheme for enlarged county districts, they would really have preferred a county borough of which they were the nucleus; we were also told that Bilston might be prepared to support such a scheme if the northern part of Coseley could be included. But the position of these districts at the core of the Black Country seems to us to be a major obstacle to success; they all have much property that needs replacement and their populations are tending to decline. A new county borough would have no obvious social or economic centre, and none of the partners would have any experience of running county borough services or even the experience gained as an excepted district for education. We did not think that the proposed combination would produce a coherent unit strong enough to hold its own among its more powerful neighbours and we therefore decided that we could not recommend a county borough based on Wednesbury and Darlaston.

Our Proposals

145. The following paragraphs describe the county boroughs we propose (see figure 6) and the reasons for the grouping we have chosen.⁽¹⁾ When we came to draw their boundaries we took the opportunity of looking at existing boundaries, where these would become boundaries between our proposed county boroughs, to ensure that we did not perpetuate anomalies and inconsistencies. We have therefore suggested a number of minor boundary changes which are described in Appendix 14 (see also Chapter 11, paragraph 198).

⁽¹⁾The estimated area, population and rateable value of each authority is given in Appendix 13.



Fig. 6. Reorganisation of Local Government in the Black Country as now proposed.

Proposed county borough including Dudley

146. This county borough is made up of:

- Dudley C.B.
- Brierley Hill U.D.
- Tipton M.B. (a small part)
- Amblecote U.D. (part)
- Coseley U.D. (part)
- Sedgley U.D. (the greater part)
- Seisdon R.D. (a small part)

The developed part of Sedgley (other than the Goldthorn Park area, which is a continuation of Wolverhampton and which we have included in the new county borough based on Wolverhampton) has obvious links with Dudley: we have excluded part of Sedgley because it is in the green belt and this could no doubt be added to the adjacent rural district of Seisdon. The central and southern parts of Coseley also have obvious links with Dudley. We regret the splitting of Coseley, but division is inevitable in view of the present shape of the district and the pattern of settlements in it. We have divided it broadly along the lines suggested by Staffordshire County Council in their first scheme for enlarged county districts (see figure 4), putting the northern part into the Wolverhampton group (see paragraph 159) and the southern part with Dudley. Although we have found it necessary to make a further division putting the eastern corridor of Coseley into the West Bromwich group, this also reflects Staffordshire's original proposal to unite this part of Coseley with Tipton rather than with Bilston. A small section of Tipton to the west of the railway has been included with the adjacent part of Coseley in the Dudley group.

147. Brierley Hill, like Coseley, is made up of several distinct settlements and the south-western part, generally known as Wordsley, has industrial and social affinities with Stourbridge rather than Dudley; but we have not been able to find a suitable boundary line which would justify our cutting up the present urban district and so we have decided to include it as a whole with Dudley. The part of Amblecote we propose to include here is virtually uninhabited and is separated from the rest of the district by a railway (see Chapter 10, paragraph 166).

Proposed county borough including Smethwick

148. This county borough is made up of:

- Smethwick C.B.
- Oldbury M.B.
- Rowley Regis M.B.
- Halesowen M.B. (part)
- Birmingham C.B. (a small part)

The first three of these are prepared to amalgamate as a county borough if they can do so without losing any of their present territory to other authorities. The county borough thus formed would have no very obvious commercial or administrative centre, although there are some important district shopping centres (see Map D); to that extent the creation of such a county borough is a departure from the principle of building round natural centres of economic and social life. But we think that the desire of the three councils for the amalgamation and their determination to make a success of it should produce a sense of unity; and we are told that a convenient site for an administrative headquarters or civic centre would be available. We had doubts about including in the proposed county borough the whole of Rowley Regis, which is divided by a high ridge running from north to south, so that the western part of the district appears to look to Dudley rather than to Smethwick. But we were told that the borough has grown together as a social unit with the mixing of people from different wards in new housing estates; the council do not want their district split; and this is in accordance with our general view that existing local government units should not be split unless there are very strong reasons for so doing.

149. Halesowen presents a more difficult problem as the council, with a dissenting minority, are against joining a county borough with the other three authorities. The borough can be divided into four parts:—

- (1) The north-eastern part, between Rowley Regis and Oldbury, where the Blackheath district (part of which is in Rowley Regis) merges with the Hill and Cakemore district;
- (2) the north-western part, which contains the industrial area of Cradley, in character very like the Cradley Heath area of Rowley Regis but separated from it by the River Stour;
- (3) the central part, south of the main Birmingham/Hagley road, containing Halesowen itself and residential areas such as Lapal and Hasbury—this part is separated from the first two by wedges of open country;
- (4) the two southern prongs into Bromsgrove rural district, most of which consist of farmland in the green belt.

Of these four areas, the Blackheath district must, we think, be put with Rowley Regis; there is local sentiment in favour of uniting the Blackheath community in one unit of administration; the area forms an awkward salient into Rowley Regis and the present boundary is ill-defined. The Cradley area has obvious affinities with the rest of the Black Country; and while the central part of the borough has less in common with the Black Country it can be argued that its inclusion in the new county borough would add variety to its social structure and would avoid splitting the borough. We at first thought that the balance of advantage lay with including the whole of Halesowen, except the open land in the extreme south, in the proposed new county borough and we made our draft proposals accordingly.

150. The representations on the draft proposals and what we heard at the conference convinced us that, while the advantages to the new county borough would be marginal, there was more than prejudice behind the opposition to our draft proposal. We have decided that in all the circumstances we should be justified in amending the draft proposals. We now propose that only Blackheath with Hill and Cakemore should be included in the county borough. In spite of the affinities of Cradley with Cradley Heath we think that this area must remain with the rest of Halesowen if the borough is to continue to be a viable unit of administration. We propose that the new boundary should follow the general line of the River Stour, Mucklow Hill and the Birmingham-Hagley road. This is not such a good boundary for the new county borough as the edge of the green belt, which was the boundary we adopted in our draft proposals, but it is practicable.

151. We admit that it is a disadvantage of our proposal that the existing borough of Halesowen will be split but, if the larger part is to remain outside the county borough, nothing else can be done. If it is thought that to split the present borough is something to be avoided at all costs, then we can only suggest that the whole borough (except the land in the green belt) should, as suggested in our draft proposals, be included in the county borough.

152. Halesowen Borough Council originally asked for an extension into Bromsgrove rural district so as to remove the indentation in the borough's southern

boundary. We make no recommendation on this; we are advised that it will be open to Worcestershire County Council, at their county review, to add part of the rural district to the borough if they think it desirable to do so.

153. In our draft proposals we also included the Quinton area of Birmingham in the new county borough. We did this for several reasons: the area seems to have affinities with the part of Oldbury immediately to the north—people in both places, for example, use the shopping centre at Bearwood; as a better-class residential area it would add balance to the new county borough; its addition would have improved the shape of the new county borough and would have given a rather better boundary. However, the people living in Quinton are strongly opposed to such a change and as we are now proposing that the greater part of Halesowen should be excluded from the new county borough, to include Quinton would not improve but worsen its shape. We are therefore now recommending only minor boundary changes in this area (see Appendix 14, page 115).

Proposed county borough including Walsall

154. This county borough is made up of:

- Walsall C.B.
- Darlaston U.D.
- Willenhall U.D. (the greater part).
- Wednesbury M.B. (part).
- Bilston M.B. (a small part)
- Aldridge U.D. (a small part)
- Wednesfield U.D. (a small part)
- Cannock R.D. (a small part)

It was not easy to decide into which of the new county boroughs Willenhall should go. The district has industrial links with Wolverhampton, which no doubt also has its attractions to people living in Willenhall as a centre for shopping and entertainment. The Willenhall council's own preference, while they were most reluctant to contemplate a county borough solution, was for Wolverhampton rather than Walsall. But to put Willenhall with Wolverhampton would make the largest of our proposed county boroughs in the Black Country even larger. If Willenhall is not to be part of the Wolverhampton group, the choice lies between putting it with West Bromwich or with Walsall. Willenhall itself has few links with West Bromwich; on the other hand part of its eastern boundary adjoins Walsall and the rest of the district is separated from Walsall only by the Bentley Estate, a newly developed part of Darlaston. We have therefore concluded that Willenhall should form part of the county borough including Walsall. There is no doubt that the Willenhall councillors would have a real contribution to make to this new authority.

155. In our draft proposals we put the greater part of Darlaston in the new county borough based on West Bromwich, because Darlaston has strong ties with Wednesbury which in turn has ties with West Bromwich. There were, however, two areas which we separated from the rest of Darlaston—the Bentley Estate, which lies between Walsall and Willenhall and which we put with Walsall, and the Moxley Estate which we put with Bilston into the proposed county borough based on Wolverhampton, since this gave a more convenient boundary along the canal. But at the conference Darlaston stressed the

family ties between the new housing estates of Bentley and Moxley and the older residential areas, and made a strong plea against the division of their district. After the conference they sent us a resolution saying that, if it was not possible to have a county borough based on Wednesbury and Darlaston or to adopt the county council's proposals, they would prefer the whole district to go into a county borough with Walsall; West Bromwich suggested that the whole of Darlaston might go into a county borough with them. We have decided that, in view of the representations of the local council and the fact that Darlaston has some affinities with Walsall, it should be included in the new county borough based on Walsall. We have had to draw a new boundary between Darlaston and Wednesbury (see Appendix 14, p. 117) where the existing boundary, which is the main Darlaston-Walsall road, runs along the edge of Darlaston's central area. The residential areas on either side of the road look to Darlaston as their nearest local centre and have direct access along Darlaston Road to the centre of Walsall, which is much closer to them than the centre of West Bromwich (with which under our proposals the rest of Wednesbury would be included).

156. At the conference Walsall pressed for the inclusion of Aldridge and Brownhills urban districts in the new county borough. For the reasons explained in Chapter 10 (paragraph 168) we have not felt able to agree to this, but as one of the objects of including these districts was said to be to strengthen the new county borough the inclusion of the whole of Darlaston should prove some compensation.

Proposed county borough including West Bromwich

157. The county borough is made up of:

- West Bromwich C.B.
- Tipton M.B. (the greater part)
- Wednesbury M.B. (the greater part)
- Aldridge U.D. (part)
- Coseley U.D. (part)

Both Tipton and Wednesbury have links with West Bromwich. There is continuity of development across the boundary and some small communities are partly within and partly outside the county borough—for example Friar Park is partly in Wednesbury and partly in West Bromwich, and Great Bridge is partly in Tipton and partly in West Bromwich. People living in these areas already use the West Bromwich shops, and are likely to do so more when the central area of West Bromwich has been redeveloped. West Bromwich is the centre of a network of bus routes and there are frequent services to Wednesbury and Tipton. The western part of Tipton has admittedly some affinities with Dudley, but we considered it preferable to avoid a major division of the district and so we have included the greater part of it in this county borough.

158. In framing our draft proposals we thought that the Great Barr area, which at present is divided between West Bromwich, Aldridge and Birmingham with a northern tip extending into Walsall, should be included in West Bromwich. The Aldridge part of this area is separated from the rest of Aldridge by green belt, and that it has affinities with the similar districts on the West Bromwich side of the boundary was shown at the Wolverhampton conference when Aldridge suggested that the two areas should be united in Aldridge. On the

Birmingham side there is no break in development west of the line of the motorway and north of the canal, and so in our draft proposals we adopted these as boundaries; this, however, meant including the whole of the Perry Barr area of Birmingham in the new county borough based on West Bromwich. After studying the representations at the conference, we decided that the transfer of the Perry Barr area was not justified merely to avoid having a county borough boundary running through the traffic junction at the Scott Arms. We have now adopted a modified line which will leave the Perry Barr area in Birmingham but at the same time simplify the position at and near the cross roads (see Appendix 14, page 113).

Proposed county borough including Wolverhampton

159. This county borough is made up of:

- Wolverhampton C.B.
- Bilston M.B.
- Coseley U.D. (part)
- Sedgley U.D. (a small part)
- Tettenhall U.D. (the greater part)
- Wednesfield U.D. (the greater part)
- Willenhall U.D. (a small part)
- Seisdon R.D. (a small part)

Several districts in this part of the Black Country group themselves naturally with Wolverhampton. Both Wednesfield and Bilston contain development which is continuous with development in Wolverhampton, and Wednesfield in particular has close social and economic links with Wolverhampton. With Bilston it is logical to include the Portobello area of Willenhall, as Staffordshire County Council's first scheme would have done, and the northern part of Coseley, which the county council would also have put with Bilston and where they proposed that Bilston's overspill should go. Again, the Goldthorn Park area in the north of Sedgley is an extension of development in Wolverhampton, and both Tettenhall and the parts of Seisdon rural district which we propose to include are very largely residential areas for Wolverhampton and are linked with it by continuous development. The western and south-western parts of Tettenhall and the northern part of Wednesfield, which we have left out of the proposed county borough, are in the green belt. They should therefore, we think, remain in the county and could be added to the rural districts of Seisdon and Cannock respectively.

160. In our draft proposals we also included in this county borough the Moxley Estate area of Darlaston urban district. As explained in paragraph 154, we now propose that this estate should go with the rest of Darlaston into the new county borough including Walsall.

Chapter 10

Proposals for Other Authorities

161. In this Chapter we discuss in more detail our proposals for the authorities outside the Black Country, taking first the areas which we previously grouped for review purposes with the Black Country but have excluded from our proposed county boroughs, and then Birmingham and Birmingham's immediate neighbours.

Stourbridge borough and Amblecote urban district

162. We have decided to leave Stourbridge out of the county borough pattern. Although parts are purely industrial, the borough as a whole does not have such strong links with the rest of the Black Country as any of the areas that we have included in the new county boroughs; and indeed, the status of Stourbridge as a centre for shopping and other purposes would have made it difficult to include it in a new county borough based on Smethwick or Dudley. On the other hand we did not find it practicable, as Dudley proposed, to make Stourbridge itself the centre of a county borough.

163. There was general agreement that Amblecote, with a population of 3,000, should not continue as an independent unit, but there were two views about what should happen to it. The urban district council are prepared to change counties and to amalgamate with Stourbridge, whose council are anxious to receive them, but Staffordshire County Council thought that Amblecote should be amalgamated with Brierley Hill urban district. While Amblecote is clearly part of the Black Country it also has social and industrial links with Stourbridge, as indeed, has part of Brierley Hill itself (see Chapter 9, paragraph 147).

164. Our conclusion is that, in view of the wish of Amblecote to join Stourbridge and its affinities with the borough, the two should be amalgamated. There is a case for drawing the boundary with Brierley Hill further north so as to include the Wordsley district but we have been unable to find any break in development there across which a suitable line could be drawn. There is also the possibility of a boundary to the south, along the line suggested at the Wolverhampton conference by Staffordshire County Council. This would give a technically better boundary than the present line, but it would exclude from the proposed Stourbridge-Amblecote county district the main residential area of Amblecote, and the residents of Amblecote clearly want to join with those of Stourbridge.

165. There remains the question of the present boundary between Amblecote and Brierley Hill. This is satisfactory for most of its length but for about a thousand yards it runs along a road (Brettell Lane) that cuts through a single residential area. On the other hand, this boundary is known and arrangements already exist between the authorities on either side for maintaining the road; and it has the incidental advantage of running along the watershed, thus separating the drainage systems on either side. We propose, therefore, to leave the present

northern boundary of Amblecote (subject to the inclusion in the new district of the whole of the Dennis Hall Estate, which is at present split by the Brierley Hill boundary) as the boundary of the new Stourbridge/Amblecote.

166. In the east of Amblecote there is an area of existing and abandoned fireclay workings which presents planning problems akin to those of a similar area on what would be the new Dudley county borough side of the present boundary. It is virtually uninhabited and is separated from the rest of Amblecote by a railway line. Stourbridge and Amblecote councils did not object to our draft proposal to put this area with Dudley but the firm who work the fireclay asked that the area should be included with Stourbridge/Amblecote, as all their associations were with Stourbridge and they felt that their estate formed a green wedge between Amblecote and the Black Country. We appreciate the force of their arguments, but in view of the affinities the area has with the adjacent part of Brierley Hill and the suitability of the railway as a boundary we have adhered to our draft proposal (see Appendix 14, p. 114).

167. Stourbridge asked for parts of Bromsgrove rural district, mainly the village of Hagley, and part of Kinver parish in Seisdon rural district to be included in the borough. We have not accepted the claims to these areas; they are in the green belt, and so cannot be required for development; the changes would not give the borough a better boundary; and, while Hagley people shop in Stourbridge, they do not for the most part work there and Hagley's links with the conurbation are not confined to Stourbridge.

Aldridge and Brownhills urban districts

168. We propose that Aldridge urban district should be amalgamated with most of Brownhills urban district to form a new county district in Staffordshire. This is in accordance with the wishes of the two district councils concerned and of Staffordshire County Council. At the conference Walsall argued that Aldridge and Brownhills should be put in the new county borough based on Walsall, and we do not dispute that there are economic and social links between Walsall and these two districts. On the other hand, they are separated from Walsall by a strip of green belt which although narrow, varying from 1½ miles to a few hundred yards in depth, is continuous (see Map B). Moreover, the problems of these two places are rather different from those of the rest of the Black Country. They are concerned not so much with urban renewal and overcrowding as with receiving overspill from other districts and building up new communities with their own industry, shopping and social life. We think that the best way to further their growth is to leave them outside the pattern of county boroughs. As development proceeds the new district will become increasingly self-sufficient and the newcomers to the district will be more likely to be drawn from all parts of the conurbation rather than from Walsall alone.

169. In proposing that the two districts should be amalgamated we have had in mind the following factors as well as the willingness of the two districts to join together:

- (a) they have similar tasks of building new residential areas, developing shopping and community centres and providing industrial estates;
- (b) their present areas project into each other's territory and create boundary problems that each district proposed to solve by taking part of the other's area;

- (c) the united district would form a strong unit capable of welding together a group of separate settlements in the green belt;
- (d) with a combined population of more than 60,000 the new district would have the right to receive delegation of county services.

170. In drawing the boundaries of the new district we have, as mentioned in Chapter 9 (paragraph 158) included the Great Barr area of Aldridge in the proposed new county borough based on West Bromwich. The Norton Canes area of Brownhills has more in common with Cannock urban district than with the new district and we propose that it should be left out. Its exclusion would also mean that the new district would not be too long and narrow. Also, we have not included the whole of the Chasewater area of Lichfield rural district which Brownhills would have liked to include (see Appendix 14, p. 126).

171. In our draft proposals we excluded the Pheasey area from the new district. It is in the extreme south of Aldridge and is separated from the rest of Aldridge by green belt land round Barr Beacon; it is an area of similar development to the Queslett estate in Birmingham and its inclusion in Birmingham would have given a good boundary along the edge of the green belt. But at the conference Aldridge pointed out that this area accounted for one-fifth of their present rateable value, the loss of which would seriously hamper the redevelopment and expansion of the combined districts. They also argued that in spite of the original similarities in development at Pheasey and on the Queslett estate there is now a difference in character between the two areas. We now recommend, therefore, that Pheasey should form part of the combined district.

BIRMINGHAM AND THE WARWICKSHIRE AUTHORITIES

Birmingham County Borough

172. For the reasons set out more fully in Chapter 5, we have not made any proposals for major changes affecting the area of Birmingham county borough. Some minor alterations in the boundaries with Smethwick, West Bromwich, Sutton Coldfield and other authorities are described in Appendix 14 (p. 110).

173. As mentioned in Chapter 6, we took action to treat as part of the special review area a number of peripheral areas and among these were parts of Bromsgrove rural district, in particular Cofton Common and Cofton Park, where there is continuous urban development across the boundary with Birmingham. We gave full consideration to the views of the rural district council, expressed both at a special meeting with their representatives and at the statutory conference, against the inclusion of any of these areas in Birmingham. We decided, however, that we should include those areas where there was continuity of residential development across the boundary and the area to be included could not be regarded as self-contained but formed part of a neighbourhood community stretching across the boundary; the line we recommend has the additional advantage of drawing the boundary of the county borough generally along the inner edge of the green belt.

Wythall

174. Birmingham's application for planning permission to build in the Wythall area concerned about 1,800 acres of land at Wythall in Bromsgrove rural

district (Worcestershire) and another 600 acres at Solihull Lodge and Major's Green in the borough of Solihull (Warwickshire).

175. The Minister's decision letter rejecting this application said that the right planning policy for Birmingham was to provide for the movement of population and industry out of the city, clear of the land which ought to be preserved as green belt. It added however that there was a question whether some of the land included in the application was not already so built up as to make its inclusion in the green belt disputable.

176. Public local inquiries into the proposals of Warwickshire and Worcestershire county councils for their section of the green belt round Birmingham were held in the summer of 1960 and we had hoped that it would be possible to make proposals for this part of the Birmingham boundary in the light of the decision on the green belt. The existing boundary runs through a built-up area and some alteration would be desirable whether the decision is to confirm the draft green belt or to withdraw the green belt to a line further south. No decision however has yet been announced and we have decided, in order not to delay submission of our report and final proposals for the whole of the special review area, not to make any proposals for altering this part of the Birmingham boundary. Our general proposal to exclude green belt land as far as possible from the proposed Solihull county borough would have the effect of leaving in the county the land Birmingham asked for at Solihull Lodge and Major's Green.

177. If the draft green belt proposals are confirmed, then we think that the suburban development on the Birmingham boundary south of the Maypole and Highter's Heath should be included in the city. We are satisfied that a good boundary line could be found, following the nearest streams, lanes and field boundaries beyond the curtilage of the buildings and taking in only a very small fringe of the green belt area.

178. Any withdrawal of the green belt to a line further south would raise the question whether there is likely to be room to build in the area of sporadic development between the Alcester Road and Major's Green. North of this area there is an isolated part of Solihull beyond Solihull Lodge which is cut off from the rest of the borough by the railway, the river and the Stratford-on-Avon canal and which will be still more isolated in future by a proposed new trunk road. We think that in any case it would be administratively more convenient to transfer this Solihull promontory to Birmingham; and if Birmingham were allowed to carry out development at Major's Green, transfer would be essential as the promontory would then be surrounded by Birmingham on three sides. The canal would make a good boundary between Birmingham and Solihull and further south the canal and the railway could form the boundary between an extended Birmingham and Warwickshire.

Solihull Borough

179. Solihull is a rapidly developing urban area south-east of Birmingham in Warwickshire; it is mainly residential and separated from the rest of the county by green belt. Solihull, however, is virtually continuous in its development with Birmingham. It forms part of the continuous urban tract ranging from Sutton Coldfield in the north, through Birmingham itself, to the southern edge of the built-up area of Solihull (since most of the south and east of the borough is in the green belt). Obviously, the first question on Solihull was whether it should

not be amalgamated with Birmingham since *prima facie* they appeared to form a single town. We decided against this for two reasons. First, while we do not propose to reduce the size of Birmingham (for reasons we have explained in Chapter 5) we do not want to increase its size if we can possibly avoid doing so. Secondly, we found that Solihull is not purely a dormitory suburb; it has some industry, and it has developed an identity of its own which offsets the arguments based on continuity of development across the boundary and the general look of forming part of the same town as Birmingham.

180. Having decided that Solihull should remain a separate authority, we had to consider whether it should remain part of the administrative county of Warwick. Its mid-1960 population was estimated at just under 93,000 and the county council estimate that it will reach 100,000 by 1965 or 1966. Solihull themselves, who applied to become a county borough, think they will reach the 100,000 level by 1962. Whichever estimate proves correct, there is clearly an early prospect of Solihull's reaching a population of 100,000. This is the level which, by Section 34 of the Act, we are required to presume is sufficient to support the discharge of the functions of a county borough. We are satisfied, having regard to the effect on the county, that the balance of advantage lies in making Solihull a county borough.

181. Because of its size and isolation from the rest of the county Solihull already forms a self-contained unit for the administration of nearly all existing county services, and it is clear from a statement supplied by the county council that taking Solihull out of the county would not seriously affect any of the county services except the children's service. The county council's only reception centre for children taken into their care is in Solihull. Loss of this centre would disrupt the county service without bringing much benefit to Solihull which has very few children in need of care. In these circumstances joint arrangements are inevitable and we understand that they would be acceptable to both authorities.

182. The administrative county of Warwickshire without Solihull would have a population of about 480,000 and a rateable value of about £6.59 million. It would therefore remain an effective unit of administration, and we do not think it would be less convenient than it is at present since, as we have already said, Solihull is isolated from the rest of the county. At our request the county and borough treasurers prepared an agreed calculation showing that if Solihull were made a county borough the estimated net saving to the Solihull ratepayers would be the equivalent of a 2s. 9d. rate, and the net increase to the ratepayers in the rest of the county would be equal to a 7d. rate: this latter figure does not take into account the possibility of reduction in the cost of county administration as the result of losing Solihull.

183. Warwickshire County Council have at no stage opposed Solihull's claim outright, although they originally thought that the matter should be deferred until 1973. Since our draft proposals were issued the county council have said they would not oppose the constitution of Solihull as a county borough provided this does not take effect before 1st April, 1964 (see Chapter 14, paragraph 234).

184. In drawing the boundaries of the new county borough, we propose to follow the policy we have adopted generally of leaving the green belt in the administrative counties. The present borough of Solihull includes a large area of green

belt, which is outside the town map area and which the Solihull council themselves say they would not wish to see developed. We have therefore proposed a new boundary for Solihull (see Appendix 14, p. 122) which would leave in Warwickshire as much of the green belt as can conveniently be excluded from the county borough. Since this area has only a small population and is subject to the building restrictions of the green belt, its exclusion would not have any material effect on the population figures for Solihull discussed above.

Sutton Coldfield Borough

185. We propose that Sutton Coldfield should remain a non-county borough within the administrative county of Warwickshire. It has a present population of just under 65,000, and will not have sufficient population within its present boundaries in the foreseeable future to qualify as a county borough. The only way it could be extended to give it the necessary population would be by taking in part of Birmingham. The council did not ask for county borough status and we see no reason to thrust it on them.

186. The council asked for considerable extensions in Aldridge urban district and Lichfield rural district but we do not accept these claims. To remove the Streetly area of Aldridge from the new Aldridge/Brownhills urban district would weaken the new district, and the loss of Little Aston would have a serious effect on Lichfield rural district.

Meriden Rural District

187. We do not propose any change in the status of the two parishes of Meriden rural district (Kingshurst and Castle Bromwich) which are in the special review area. Admittedly the people living in these places have strong ties with Birmingham and most of them originally came from Birmingham—at Kingshurst they are tenants of a Birmingham council estate. Development is continuous with Birmingham and there are strong social and economic links with the city. On the other hand, Birmingham have not asked for these parishes to be included in the county borough and we understand that, when permission was given for Birmingham to build their housing estate at Kingshurst, it was agreed that this permission would not be used subsequently to support a claim for boundary extension.

188. It was represented to us that, while most of the people come from Birmingham and still work and shop there, a separate community life is being built up in each of the parishes, based on the previously existing parish council in Castle Bromwich and the new council in the newly-formed parish of Kingshurst. The two parishes are not entirely populated by former residents of Birmingham, as there are some Meriden council tenants from other parts of the rural district; and Coleshill, which is the administrative centre for the rural district, is only 3½ miles away.

189. In our view, however, the decisive consideration is that it is important to have a strong rural district council assisting the county to control the green belt area between Birmingham and Coventry. We concluded that any benefits which might accrue from putting these built-up areas into the city would, on balance, be less than the harm which would be done by weakening Meriden's present position as a strong rural district.

Chapter 11

Detailed Boundaries

190. Having determined the broad pattern of local government areas in the special review area we then had to define the boundaries of these areas in detail. The boundaries we had put forward in our draft proposals were subjected to detailed scrutiny at a series of joint meetings of technical officers of the Commission and of the local authorities. We are grateful to the local authorities for the help which was given by their officers. These discussions have enabled us to make many improvements in the details of our boundary proposals, although we would emphasise that responsibility for the boundaries we now propose is entirely ours and that the local authorities are not in any way committed by these discussions to agreement with our proposals.

191. A satisfactory boundary should be clearly defined, visible on the ground and not a mere line on a map; it should be recognisable by the local people as having significance for them as a community; and it should have some degree of permanence. A boundary which meets these requirements contributes to the convenience and effectiveness of local government.

192. Drawing boundaries in a conurbation presents problems different from those which are met in delimiting boundaries in the open country, where it is possible to use natural features such as hill ridges and rivers and to mark the division between one community and another by taking the boundary through the least populated areas. In a continuously built-up area the local communities are less easily defined and there must often be an element of compromise in deciding where the line should be drawn. We have done our best after first hand study of the existing boundaries to choose boundaries which are clear and likely to last. The unreality of so many of the boundaries in the special review area today is due to their having been overtaken by subsequent development. The result has been boundaries which sever local communities, which divide areas of land use that would be better planned and administered by one authority, and which in places cut through curtilages and even through buildings.

Internal Boundaries

193. We list below a number of features which we have used as boundaries within the special review area. We have tried as far as possible to take those features, both natural and man-made, which tend to separate the people living on either side of them; and we have paid regard to the proposed future development as shown in development plans.

- (i) Rivers may in some circumstances link the communities on either side of them, but often they make good boundaries in conurbations as elsewhere. They act as a barrier to communications except at bridge points (which may be few), they are easily recognisable as a boundary and are not often subject to change. Sometimes a floodable area in the valley bottom imposes a further break in urban development. Where we have

taken a river as a boundary, we have drawn the line down the centre of the river, as the riparian authorities on both sides have an interest in the river.

- (ii) *Railways* are often admirable boundaries in a built-up area since they act as local barriers, are easily distinguishable and are likely to last. In using a railway as a boundary, we have followed the boundary of the railway operational land rather than the centre of the track so that the railway is wholly within one authority's area.
- (iii) *Canals* also are easily recognisable even if they become disused. Since, however, in that event they can be put to some other purpose (for example, recreation or filled in to serve as highways), we put the whole of a canal with its adjacent land in one authority's area in order to facilitate such alternative uses.
- (iv) *The line of a major change in land use* can provide a suitable boundary—where there is an area of open space or school playing fields, for example, or a large industrial area separating the residential areas on either side; and to put the whole of an area devoted to a single use (for example mineral workings) into one local authority's area simplifies planning. Generally we have tried to look ahead by consulting the development plan and paying regard to future rather than present land use. The extent to which we have been able to take advantage of land use divisions may be seen from Map B.
- (v) *Roads* are commonly used as boundaries but they are not so good as rivers, railways and canals, and we feel that, in using them, it is essential to distinguish between types of roads. A local road, for example, in a residential area tends to bind the area together rather than to divide; even a major road, while for the most part forming a barrier to local movements across it, may form the axis of a shopping centre and so become the focal point round which a community develops. On the other hand, Class A or trunk roads and, even more so, motorways do act to some extent as barriers, and they therefore tend to separate the urban areas on either side (as planning authorities often recognise by using them as boundaries between residential neighbourhoods). Even a local road is better than a boundary which cuts through buildings.

194. Where a road is to be used as a boundary there are four possible lines:

- (a) a constant distance—normally 220 feet—from the centre of the road,
- (b) the rear curtilages of development fronting one side,
- (c) the edge of the road on one side,
- (d) the centre of the road.

Each of these lines has its advantages and disadvantages and the choice must be made after full study of the local circumstances.

- (a) The 220 ft. line is best, if practicable, because it puts under one authority the road itself and responsibility for controlling development on either side. But in an urban area the 220 ft. line may cut arbitrarily through property and, even if the line does not pass through developed property, it lacks visual definition on the ground.
- (b) The rear curtilage line avoids some of these disadvantages but it is often highly irregular and if it is to be adopted there must be reasonable certainty that future redevelopment will not alter the line of the existing curtilages.

- (c) The boundary of the road is suitable on the periphery of a built-up area, where for example, it marks the division between the built-up area and the green belt. Within a built-up area, however, it is inappropriate because the people who live on each side of a road should have some direct say in the responsibility for looking after it (although motorways are an exception to this principle in that adjacent development will have no direct access and the whole cost of maintenance is met by the Ministry of Transport).
- (d) The centre of the road is often the best choice in built-up areas. This will involve joint arrangements for the maintenance and control of the road but there are many examples of this working satisfactorily (for example, where each authority undertakes responsibility for a stretch of the road). The centre of the road is already the boundary in many parts of the conurbation and we found that with some notable exceptions most of the local authorities were in favour of this.

External Boundaries

195. In drawing the external boundaries of the special review area we have also had regard to green belt proposals. The green belt as at present defined has been approved in principle, but is subject to modification before being incorporated in the statutory development plans. We have chosen as boundaries the nearest definable features to the inner edge of the green belt.

Detailed Definition of Boundaries

196. The boundaries we propose for our reorganisation of the special review area are shown in such detail as the scale will allow on a series of $2\frac{1}{2}$ " definitive maps, one for each of the eleven proposed local government areas. These maps are published separately from this report.

197. It has been found convenient for reference purposes to divide the proposed boundary of each local government area into sections which are lettered on the maps and the convention has been adopted of lettering the boundary from an appropriate northerly point round each area in a clockwise direction. The boundaries and lettered sections are reproduced at 1" scale on Map A, Summary of Proposals, accompanying this report. Map A thus serves both as a summary of our proposals for the special review area and as an index cross-referencing the lettered sections on internal boundaries common to two adjacent local government areas.

198. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ " definitive maps cannot always show precisely what features the proposed boundaries follow; they have, therefore, been supplemented by a comprehensive descriptive schedule of boundaries which forms Appendix 14. As a detailed definition of the boundaries, the schedule thus takes precedence over the line shown on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ " maps.

199. In most places the boundaries as shown on the definitive maps and described in the schedule are self-explanatory; where there is any doubt a comment has been added in the schedule. Some of these comments indicate that the feature which we adopt to define the boundary is liable to change in the foreseeable future, usually a road which is to be widened or realigned, or which is planned

but not yet built. While these proposed changes have been approved in principle, their precise line sometimes remains subject to modification until nearer the date of construction. In some instances the line will be known before any order is made by the Minister and, in that event, we assume this would be taken into account in the order. If, however, the final line has not been settled when the order is made, we hope that appropriate action would subsequently be taken under the powers of the Local Government Act, 1933, by the local authorities concerned and the Minister to ensure that the intention of our recommendations is carried out. Those sections of the boundary covered by this paragraph are marked by an asterisk in the schedule.

Chapter 12

Overspill

200. The movement of overspill from the special review area as a whole is part of a natural trend which has already begun. The population of the special review area, which is now more than 2.3 millions, has grown by rather more than 50,000 in the last ten years. This growth would have been almost twice as much if the net loss by migration had not partially offset the marked excess of births over deaths. Since the war more people have moved out of the conurbation than into it. This net outward movement of population is in contrast with the more rapid growth of population in the past when the local natural increase was reinforced by a net gain by migration from other parts of the country. The outward movement of population may take two forms; voluntary migration to areas where private housing is available and planned overspill to houses built by local authorities in expanding residential areas in or beyond the green belt. Planned movements of population from this area have so far come only from Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

Future Needs of the Black Country

201. Birmingham's overspill problem is immediate and well known. The five county boroughs in the Black Country, constituted as we propose, appear at first sight to have little or no problem. We have, however, made our own examination of the probable future needs of these areas, taking into account five factors.

202. First, the conurbation is now surrounded by a green belt which has been approved in principle. The authorities surrounded by that green belt can therefore no longer look to an outward spread of the built-up area to meet the future demand for housing land.

203. Second, the amount of land left which is capable of development is rapidly dwindling. In the summer of 1959 we sent a questionnaire to the local planning authorities in the Black Country and found that, of all the land shown for housing use in their development plans, little more than 5,000 acres then remained undeveloped. The authorities estimated that rather less than 500 acres originally shown in their plans to remain undeveloped or derelict, could now also be considered suitable for housing purposes, giving a total land reserve of about 5,500 acres. If recent rates of house-building at currently accepted densities continue, this reserve of land would be exhausted within about eight years. This land reserve is not evenly distributed throughout the Black Country authorities and some areas will run out of land sooner than others. Our own proposals for grouping the authorities into five county boroughs would help to get a more even spread of the resources; but, even so, some of the five would have enough land for little more than five years house-building, and none would have any housing land after eleven years. It is possible, of course, to

assume changes in either building rates or densities of development but we are satisfied that any such changes would be likely to have only a marginal effect on the estimate.

204. Third, so far as local authority house-building is concerned, the emphasis has changed in recent years from a policy of adding to the stock of new dwellings to one of replacing obsolete dwellings. Large areas of old high-density housing remain to be cleared and it is the common experience that, building at an acceptable density, it is seldom possible to rehouse in the same areas all the people now living there.

205. Fourth, the population of the conurbation will continue to grow by excess of births over deaths. The Registrar General's population projections for 1959-1981 show that a natural increase of almost 300,000 is to be expected. This indication of a vast continued demand for more housing appears even more formidable in the light of the persistent trend towards smaller household units; this gives rise to a continuing housing demand even where the total population remains stable.

206. Fifth, the current demand for developable land comes in part from rising standards of urban planning which themselves reflect the rising standard of living. The problems of congestion are not confined to houses: industries in old buildings are requiring on redevelopment more land than they now occupy; traffic congestion is leading to a demand for more and wider roads and for more garages and car parks. In view of the many pressing claims on what little undeveloped land remains, it appears likely that the population of the special review area is now very near its peak and that these demands for more living space, accentuated by the redevelopment of high-density housing, would result in the optimum population for the special review area being below its present level.

Total Requirements for Overspill

207. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to expect that the present outward movement of population will go on and that the 1981 population of the conurbation may be about 100,000 less than it is at present. This spreading of the population, taken together with the expected natural growth, suggests a total movement from the special review area of something like 400,000 people during the next twenty years. It may be argued that population movements on such a scale are not likely to be achieved within this time and further that much of such dispersal as occurs will take the form of voluntary movement rather than planned overspill. Even so the total problem is of such a size as to convince us that a very substantial movement will in fact take place; that so long as planning continues, planned overspill will play a significant role in this process; and that the proper planning of reception areas for overspill must have regard to the volume and direction of the voluntary migration.

208. We conclude therefore that, while our proposals for county boroughs in the Black Country will ease the position for some years by sharing out the available land more evenly, they cannot prevent the Black Country as a whole from running out of developable land within the fairly near future.

The Need for Co-ordination

209. It may be argued that it is still unnecessary to have a single overspill organisation for both Birmingham and the Black Country, since each could deal with its own problems separately. But such an argument stems from a misconception of the nature of overspill schemes. Schemes of this kind must provide for the movement of industry to give employment since, in general, the population who have moved cannot, or should not, be expected to travel back daily across the green belt to work in the conurbation. This need to move industry means that the different parts of the special review area must be looked at together. Any factory in Birmingham, or in one of the Black Country county boroughs, is very likely to draw workers from more than one local authority area. An industrialist with a factory in, say, Birmingham who is moving his factory out as part of an overspill scheme may want to take with him some workers who live in another authority's area and are within that authority's housing responsibility; and he will have vacancies which could be filled by suitably qualified workers from any part of the conurbation. Co-ordination is needed to ensure that suitability for the job is matched with housing need irrespective of local boundaries and that any liability for housing contributions under the overspill scheme is sorted out between the local authorities.

210. Moreover, because of the close links between trades in many parts of the conurbation, success in getting industry to move may depend on a number of factories in different local authority areas moving at about the same time. Clearly the more sites an overspill authority can suggest to an industrialist, the greater the chance of persuading him to move. Finally, from the point of view of the reception areas, it is obviously easier to deal with one rather than with several competitors for sites for overspill—and it should be easier for the exporting authorities too, if they can avoid competition for the same limited number of sites.

Draft Proposals for an Overspill Authority

211. What should be the composition and powers of the proposed authority for dealing with overspill from the special review area as a whole? In our draft proposals, we recommended that this authority should take the form of a joint board. We added that it should cover both Birmingham and the five proposed county boroughs in the Black Country; that it should draw up an overspill programme, negotiate agreement with outside authorities, make the administrative arrangements for the movement of people and industry, and if necessary, undertake some development in the areas where overspill is to go.

212. At the Wolverhampton conference our draft proposals received general approval from the representatives of the five Black Country county boroughs, although they did not expect any serious overspill problem within the Black Country during the next ten years. There were, however, two main lines of criticism, both of them agreeing on the one point that the proposed joint authority should contain representatives of the importing as well as the exporting authorities. Birmingham and Staffordshire, who were opposed to the proposal, thought that the powers envisaged for the board went too far and that what was needed was an extension of the existing arrangements for joint consultation between Birmingham and the three adjacent counties. They also drew attention to the disadvantages of a joint board in practice as a piece of local government

machinery and doubted whether Birmingham's problem could be solved without one or more new towns. Others, and particularly the Midlands New Towns Society, supported the proposal for a joint authority but thought that it should have more scope, powers and finance than our draft proposals envisaged.

Constitution of the Overspill Authority

213. We have looked again at our proposals for the overspill authority in the light of everything that was said at the conference and of developments since then. The most important of these was the Minister's statement of 16th September 1960 that he was having enquiries made to see whether, in order to deal with the overspill problem of the West Midlands, a suitable site could be found for a new town under the New Towns Act, 1946; and that a possibility being investigated was the area of Dawley in Shropshire. Proposals to take large amounts of overspill were also made during the summer of 1960 by the county boroughs of Burton upon Trent and Worcester.

214. Even with the prospect of a new town for the West Midlands, our consideration of future population trends and land needs leaves us in no doubt that overspill arrangements between the local authorities will still be necessary on a large scale. We remain convinced, therefore, that an overspill authority would have an essential part to play. A decision on the membership of such an authority must, however, take account of the fact that it is still uncertain where most of the overspill from the West Midlands Special Review Area is to go. Hitherto population movements have been almost entirely into Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire, but Shropshire now comes prominently into the picture, and there has been mention of sites in counties even further afield. In view of this uncertainty and the wide area of search for overspill sites we do not think it would be practicable to have a board which included the receiving authorities; because some of the authorities which now seem to be obvious members might in the end turn out to be taking little or no overspill, while other areas which may have a big contribution to make cannot be known for certain in advance. To include every county with a possible interest would produce an unwieldy body and would be more likely to result in talk and deadlock than in decisive action.

215. Accordingly, we recommend that the board should be composed of representatives of Birmingham and the five new county boroughs in the Black Country. We do not think that a board so constituted would be open to the general objection against joint boards put forward by Birmingham. We share their doubts about a board set up in the hope of reconciling conflicting interests and that is one reason why we have not proposed a joint board of exporting and receiving authorities. But a board which is the instrument of action for an agreed policy is not open to the same objection. Birmingham and the five county boroughs will have a common interest in securing effective arrangements for overspill and it should be possible for them to work effectively together to that end. The exact composition of the board would be a matter to be settled in the Minister's order setting it up, but we envisage a board that would not be too large, say not more than about twenty members. A few co-opted members might be added, especially to represent industry. We also think that it would

help the work of the board, at least initially, to have an independent chairman. The local authorities might well agree among themselves upon such an appointment, preferably after consultation with the Minister.

Powers of the Overspill Authority

216. The tasks of the authority must include:

- (i) compiling and maintaining an industrial register—on the lines of the London Industrial Selection Scheme—of people in housing need in the special review area and willing to move, classified according to their industrial skills; this would be a list from which any industrialist establishing a factory in a reception area could recruit workers and it would be important that it should be kept up to date;
- (ii) keeping under comprehensive review the planning trends (for example in population, size of households, industrial development) which determine the size of the conurbation's overspill problem;
- (iii) studying the possible sites for reception of overspill and deciding what the number and size of overspill reception schemes should be for submission to the Minister;
- (iv) providing an industrial bureau which would be a central point where interested industrialists could be given full information about opportunities in the receiving areas and where, as far as possible, everything which affected industrial overspill could be brought to a focus; such a bureau could form a valuable link between the county boroughs, which have a problem of relocating their own non-conforming industry, and the Board of Trade, which has the responsibility for considering distribution of industry in the conurbation and beyond as part of the national pattern.

217. These functions would be an extension of what is already being done informally under joint arrangements between Birmingham and the surrounding counties. There are also two other important issues which are much more controversial. First is the question whether the overspill authority should have any planning powers. We have already given our reasons for not creating a continuous single planning authority for the conurbation and these would apply to an overspill board with planning powers. We have also considered, in the light of all that was said at the conference, the suggestion that the overspill authority should have planning powers in the reception areas. This could be done either by giving the authority concurrent powers with the planning authority in each of the receiving areas or by making it the sole planning authority for an area round the conurbation. The first of these alternatives would be unworkable; and the second would mean giving the overspill authority planning powers over such a wide area that it would in fact become a regional planning authority covering all or most of several counties. This would go far beyond our concept of an overspill authority and, we believe, beyond the terms of reference given to us by Parliament.

218. The second issue is the extent to which the overspill authority should carry out development. Normally, we should expect this to be done by the authority or authorities in the receiving area—the county and county district councils acting in co-operation—or by private enterprise, or by a mixture of both. But

we do envisage the possibility of the overspill authority's doing some development itself, if the receiving authorities cannot cope with development on this scale. For this purpose the powers of the Town Development Act, 1952, should be made available to the authority in the order setting it up. Another possibility would be for the overspill authority to use one of its constituent members as its agent; this would avoid having to set up a large development organisation which might not be needed on a regular basis.

219. Although we do not recommend direct representation of the receiving areas on the overspill board, it would probably be helpful to have an *ad hoc* committee to deal with each of the main local authority overspill schemes. The committee would be representative of both receiving and exporting authorities; and it would help to co-ordinate the problems of planning and development which had to be met in the course of each particular scheme.

220. We have not thought it necessary to go into details of the financial arrangements required for overspill. That is a matter which can be settled when the board is constituted. But we are satisfied that arrangements are feasible on the general lines of a Town Development Act scheme; we assume that the exporting authorities would make a contribution per house, that the counties would be willing to help with the cost of water supply and sewerage so far as these expenses would not be met by Exchequer grant; and that, after a time, there should be some profit on the provision of facilities such as industrial sites, shopping centres and garages which could be used to reimburse those authorities who had previously had to bear the initial annual deficit on the scheme.

221. While the board would not require to employ a large staff, it should not have to rely on the staffs of its constituent members. Staffing is the key to the success of this authority for overspill. We think that it should have a small but highly qualified staff with a director or manager at the head (of the calibre of the general managers of the new town Development Corporations), somebody who could meet the industrialists on equal terms and convince them of the importance and practicability of moving out of the conurbation to the developing areas beyond the green belt. He would have to be supported by senior officers with planning experience and architectural, engineering and estate management qualifications to deal with the board's primary function—the movement of population and industry from the conurbation to selected sites elsewhere. It would be a fatal mistake for the importance of proper staffing to be underestimated.

Co-ordination of Planning in the Conurbation

222. The prime object of the board is the limited one of acting as a negotiating body on behalf of the exporting authorities. Yet the existence of such a body would be bound to have an influence on planning in the conurbation. In working towards the primary objective of dealing with overspill, the constituent authorities would have to discuss, through the machinery of the board, their common planning problems. We recognise that the present climate of opinion in the review area is not favourable to a single planning authority for the whole of the conurbation, and we have already explained our reasons for thinking that such an authority is not a necessity in the light of the special local circumstances of this area. But we think that, in drawing up the plans for overspill, the

constituent authorities would need to look afresh at their internal planning problems and that they would be helped in doing so if they were brought together at this one point of common interest and became accustomed to taking joint action for this limited objective. The board's staff would be able to help by bringing together information on common problems. It would thus have an important function as an intelligence organisation for the conurbation as a whole and should in this way help the planning authorities to plan comprehensively. The board should be required to prepare an annual report and this, if published, would form a useful forum for discussing overspill arrangements and any underlying planning problems which may affect the scale on which those arrangements must be made.

223. While we do not think it necessary in this area to impose any overall planning machinery upon the special review area, we believe that, when the local planning authorities have become used to discussing overspill and the related planning problems together, they may well voluntarily decide to build further upon the machinery already to their hands in the overspill board. How far it would be acceptable or appropriate to develop such machinery we cannot, at this stage, predict; but we do not exclude the possibility that from this co-operation on the limited objective of overspill arrangements there might grow some permanent machinery, acceptable to the local authorities themselves, for securing such co-ordination as may in future be necessary on the wider problems of planning within the conurbation. The authorities in this area have a good record of co-operation. In making this recommendation for an overspill authority, therefore, we envisage the possibility that its scope would develop. But we wish, in conclusion, to emphasise that it has a worthwhile job to do in the more limited field and that if co-ordination is to be achieved in the wider fields of planning it is most likely to come, in the circumstances of this area, from experience of co-operation on a more limited objective.

Chapter 13

Sewage Disposal

224. In the highly industrialised area of the West Midlands conurbation sewage disposal presents special technical problems, particularly in the prevention of river pollution. Effective treatment of trade effluent requires expensive treatment works, backed by specialist staff and laboratories. The greatest trade effluent problem is east of the Trent-Severn watershed, where sewage from the larger part of the special review area drains into the valley of the River Tame and its tributary the Rea, which flow into the River Trent. The Trent River Board have said that river conditions are still unsatisfactory; they feel that the reduction of the sewage disposal authorities in the West Midlands to as few as possible, having regard to local conditions and topography, would make it much easier to improve the situation.

225. We saw no special merit in one authority's controlling sewage disposal for the whole of the special review area. The argument that this would be advantageous because all industrial areas have similar problems over the treatment of trade effluents is in our view outweighed by the size of the area and the fact that it is divided into two separate catchment areas.

The Tame Valley

226. At present the purification of sewage from Birmingham, Smethwick, Selly, Sutton Coldfield and parts of Meriden, Aldridge, Oldbury and Bromsgrove is the responsibility of the Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board, who have great experience in dealing with trade effluents and possess their own laboratory and allied technical services. Treatment of sewage in the upper Tame valley, however, is the responsibility of the seventeen local authorities in the area, some of them very small and many of them unable to afford the necessary specialist staff, laboratory and skilled supervision at their sewage works. As a result, pollution of the upper Tame tends to frustrate the work done by the existing board lower down.

227. Under our main proposals most of the upper Tame valley would be divided between four county boroughs large enough to employ competent technical staff specialising in sewage disposal. But this would not entirely do away with the difficulties due to having more than one authority responsible for this highly specialised function in a single drainage area. If a single sewage works were thought desirable it would be virtually impossible to construct it, and the system of trunk sewers leading to it, without a single authority; if it were thought technically preferable to have separate, but larger, works progress might still be held up by differences in the approach of the different authorities, and the areas to be served by each of the works might not correspond with those of the new county boroughs.

228. We therefore made a draft proposal that there should be unified control of sewage disposal in the upper Tame and that this might be achieved by

extending the area of the Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board. At the Wolverhampton conference, the need for a single authority for the upper Tame was universally recognised. But there was a division of opinion on whether there should be one board for the whole valley, as we had proposed, or a separate board for the upper Tame alone. The county boroughs of Walsall and West Bromwich felt that a separate board was desirable; the Trent River Board, while not taking sides on the issue of one board or two, regarded the upper Tame area as large enough to support a separate board, which would therefore be practicable, technically, if it were thought desirable on other grounds. The Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board, however, strongly supported our proposal of one board for both upper and lower Tame; they are a body of unrivalled experience and reputation in this work and, while it would be possible to provide separate laboratory and experimental facilities for the upper Tame Board (or to arrange for them to share the Birmingham, Tame and Rea's facilities), a single board seems the simpler solution. The Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board, supported by Walsall, wanted the sewage disposal boards to be given powers to control as well as advise industrialists over discharges; Birmingham, however, did not agree that the boards as well as the local authorities should have powers and duties under the Public Health (Drainage of Trade Premises) Act, 1937.

229. We recognise that sewage disposal is a matter which involves highly technical considerations. There are bound to be technical consultations with the authorities concerned before an order can be made; we therefore restrict our recommendations to the principle of establishing a unified authority for sewage disposal in the upper Tame valley, although we think that there is on balance a stronger case for a single board for both upper and lower Tame than for two separate boards. Similarly, while we have indicated broadly the areas to be included in sewage disposal boards for the Tame and upper Stour, these may well need revision in the light of the more expert knowledge that will be at the Minister's disposal. Nor do we feel obliged to recommend in detail the constitution and powers of the board (or boards). We think it would be practicable, however, to transform the Birmingham, Tame and Rea Board into a Tame Valley Drainage Board under the Public Health Act, 1936, and to add the county boroughs based on Dudley, Smethwick, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton and the new Aldridge-Brownhills urban district, all or part of whose areas would be comprised in the board's area, to the constituents of the existing board. The general area to be administered by the proposed board should be the area of the Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board and the drainage area of the upper Tame basin. The new board should be a sewerage authority for the purposes of the Public Health Act, 1936; and under this Act and the Public Health (Drainage of Trade Premises) Act, 1937, it should have power to accept any trade effluent for treatment, if the local authority concerned had no objection, and should be given concurrent powers with the member authorities to provide and maintain sewers, and to make tests and take samples. The Board might alone have the power to make special charges for the discharge of trade effluent, but should be able to contribute to the cost of sewers provided by a local sanitary authority; such a course, if adopted, would mean the repeal of Section 7 of the Birmingham Corporation Act, 1958 (which gives the Corporation power to make special charges for the reception and conveying of trade effluent).

The Upper Stour Valley

230. At present sewage disposal in the upper Stour valley is the responsibility of the Upper Stour Valley Main Sewerage Board, whose area also extends slightly across the Severn-Trent watershed into the upper Tame valley, the Stourbridge Main Drainage Board (comprising Stourbridge and Amblecote) and Brierley Hill urban district. These three drainage authorities have adjoining sewage farms west of Stourbridge in Seisdon rural district. We understand that one of these needs replacement by a new works and the question naturally arises whether one enlarged works might not serve the needs of all three.

231. The problem of pollution in this area is not so serious as in the upper Tame but the Severn River Board still consider the upper Stour to be greatly polluted and advocate a single sewage disposal board for the upper Stour—which we put forward in our draft proposals—to deal with the problem. At the conference the Severn River Board and Seisdon rural district welcomed our proposal. Stourbridge Main Drainage Board saw no need for a board for the upper Stour valley; they would participate if one were set up but hoped their area of Stourbridge and Amblecote would be excluded—partly on technical grounds but more strongly on financial, since they had in their view already undertaken what is necessary at considerable cost and did not now wish to be burdened with the cost of schemes to meet the needs of others. The Upper Stour Valley Main Drainage Board also were afraid of the financial effect of our draft proposal, but otherwise accepted it.

232. Our recommendation is that a board should be set up for the upper Stour but we think that it would be reasonable at the outset to provide for some measure of differential rating. The general area to be administered by the board should be the area of the Upper Stour Valley Main Sewerage Board west of the watershed of the rivers Trent and Severn, the area of Stourbridge Main Drainage Board, Brierley Hill urban district, and the parts of Dudley county borough and Sedgley urban district administered under the Dudley Sewage Act, 1879.

Chapter 14

The Effect of our Proposals on the Counties

233. We have now completed our description of our proposals and the reasons for them. As we said at the beginning of Chapter 9, we do not think there is any ideal solution to the problems of local government. Any proposals for change must therefore be looked at to see what are the probable gains and losses and to decide where the balance of advantage lies. So far as our proposals are concerned, this is particularly important in considering the proposals for a pattern of county boroughs in the Black Country. We believe that the pattern we propose will bring the greatest benefit to the inhabitants of the Black Country as a whole. But we know also that it will affect the counties of Staffordshire and Worcestershire; and Warwickshire are affected by our other proposals, in particular the creation of a county borough of Solihull. Before we finally strike a balance we must, therefore, look at the effect of our proposals on the administrative arrangements of these county councils and on the people who will be left in their care. Parts of these three counties are also in the West Midlands General Review Area. We are satisfied that the proposals we are making for that review area will not have any material effect on these counties over and above the effect of our proposals for the special review area.

Warwickshire and Worcestershire

234. So far as Warwickshire and Worcestershire are concerned, the county councils themselves have confirmed our own provisional conclusions that the changes we propose would not affect them enough to impair their future as effective and convenient areas of local government. Warwickshire would be reduced in round figures (taking into account also our proposals for the general review area) to a population of 480,000 and a rateable value of £6,590,000. The only substantial change affecting Warwickshire—the conversion of Solihull into a county borough—has now been accepted by the county council provided that it does not come into effect before 1st April, 1964. Warwickshire asked for this date, which is acceptable to Solihull, because they estimated that Solihull's population would pass the 100,000 mark by the end of 1963 and the 1st April following would coincide with the triennial election of county councillors; it would also be the date by which the new council offices in Solihull are expected to be fully in use. Both councils would use the time to 1st April 1964 in preparing their services for the change and we are accordingly fully satisfied that we can make this proposal without having any fears about the effects on the county of Warwick.

235. Worcestershire do not oppose the wish of Oldbury to become part of a county borough and their opposition to the draft proposals was, therefore, in substance limited to Halesowen. Here the county council's objection, as we understand it, was not founded on any argument of damage to the county by loss of population or rateable value, but was made in support of the wishes of the inhabitants to remain in an independent borough in Worcestershire instead of

becoming part of a county borough. We are satisfied that the loss even of the whole borough would not affect Worcestershire's ability to provide effective and convenient local government for the rest of the county. Our revised proposals for Halesowen would mean a loss of only about 10,000 population to Worcestershire; and the effect of this would be offset to some extent by the acquisition of Amblecote urban district which, although not large in population, has a high rateable value per head.

Staffordshire

236. The effect of our proposals on Staffordshire would be more serious. The changes we propose in the Black Country are substantial and together with those proposed for the West Midlands General Review Area would reduce the county from about 970,000 to about 630,000 population and from a rateable value of just under £10,700,000 to one of £7,000,000. At the Wolverhampton conference the county council said that the reduction in their population would mean a reduction in the scope and quality of the county services. But we do not think that on further reflection they would press this point. We are sure that with a population of more than 600,000 Staffordshire would continue to be a fully effective county, and with the reduction in area it would be a more convenient unit of administration.

237. Owing to the extent to which the administration of county services in the Black Country has been decentralised, we think that the institutions serving the Black Country could be readily separated from those for the rest of the county, although in a few cases some joint arrangements might need to be made with the county boroughs. The reduction in the county council's general expenditure on services should be broadly proportionate to the loss of population and rateable value in the Black Country. The administrative and professional staff at headquarters could not immediately be reduced in the same proportion and in some services the county council might be faced with a choice between doing without one or two of the present specialists or spreading the cost of the same staff over a smaller population. We have no doubt what Staffordshire's choice would be when it came to the point; nor do we think that maintaining the standard of services would have more than a marginal effect on the county's rate burden. They themselves did not make any objection on financial grounds either in their written observations on the draft proposals or in the discussions at the conference. Looking at the needs of the area as a whole we are confident that any disadvantages to the county of Staffordshire outside the Black Country would be far outweighed by the improvement in effectiveness and convenience of local government which our proposals would produce inside the Black Country.

The County Districts

238. We now consider the question of loss and gain in a different sense—the loss that our proposals would involve in the disappearance of the county districts in the Black Country, a subject of great importance which we have discussed in Chapter 8. After reading the written observations of the districts on the draft proposals, and listening to the speeches made on their behalf at the Wolverhampton conference, we feel that their general apprehensions fall under two heads. First, they fear that merger in a larger unit would mean not only a reduction in the number of council seats, but also a loss of civic spirit and enthusiasm,

and therefore a weakening of local government in the area. This last is a matter of imponderables, but our view is that the new county boroughs would not be so large that they could not attract a feeling of local patriotism and yet, at the same time, preserve those smaller local communities which are the distinction and pride of the Black Country. After all, some at least of the existing county districts were formed from smaller county districts in the recent past, and nearly all still contain several small highly local communities; to group the districts in county boroughs, therefore, is only to take one step further in a process which has already been successfully undertaken. Moreover, it is a natural step since four of the five county boroughs we propose are centred on a local focus of economic and social life for the surrounding districts and the fifth—the county borough including Smethwick—is one which the participants themselves have spontaneously decided to create.

239. The second fear is that the redevelopment and economic life of the smaller units would be prejudiced if they were merged in a county borough or that in some way their interests would be subordinated to those of the original county boroughs. The anxiety about the future of Bilston Market was an example of this fear. Yet the councils of the new county boroughs would be representative of their area as a whole; councillors from the existing county borough would be little more numerous than those from the previous county districts or would even be in a clear minority. Once the areas were amalgamated, the new council would be concerned to do its best for the whole of its area, without distinction whether a particular scheme would be of more benefit to a former county district than to the previous county borough. Such distinctions would become meaningless and the pace of development would be likely to be increased rather than reduced, because there would be available the resources of a much larger unit.

240. Further, the people living in the county districts would benefit by having a say in the administration of services (not merely the ordinary local government services, but those like the buses and other trading services as well) which are of real interest to them and are at present the exclusive responsibility of the county boroughs. They would also have a more direct participation in the control of education, health and welfare than they could have under even the most liberal scheme of delegation from the county. Delegation can be a very good thing in allowing the small authority to manage the day-to-day running of services which it is not large enough to provide on its own. But if the geographical circumstances permit—and in this area they do—then in a county borough there is more direct local responsibility than delegation can give. Moreover, there are several services which cannot be delegated to county districts, but which are provided by a county borough and in whose administration, therefore, the local people would, if our proposals were accepted, have a far more direct part to play.

Our General Aim

241. In putting forward our proposals for a county borough pattern for the Black Country, our aim has been to study the local circumstances of this review area and to give them full weight in applying any general principles. In so far as we have followed such general principles they would be those which Staffordshire County Council themselves put forward in their representations on our draft proposals. "The basic requirements for the improvement of local government

are an adaptation of various areas and responsibilities designed to put more life and vigour into the actual business of local government and to increase local interest and participation in it. Local government should not be a mere system of decentralisation imposed from above, but should draw its strength from, and be the expression of, the local community it serves. It should grow out of the needs of the local community, be focussed on a recognisable centre, and be concerned with an area which can be readily comprehended by the people living there as a distinct unit. It should be small enough to enable the public to preserve contact with councillors and officers as persons, and to encourage a sense in the individual of belonging to a real community and having a significant part to play in its life".

242. While we are happy to adopt these general principles from Staffordshire County Council, we think they are better implemented by our proposals than their own. The Staffordshire proposals would produce county districts amalgamating places so dissimilar as Bilston and Tipton; they would leave the Black Country divided between four or five county boroughs and two counties; and they would leave the administration of county services for the county districts in the Black Country centred upon county towns more than 20 miles away. Under our proposals, there would be five county boroughs, all of them large enough to have adequate resources and staff, yet not so large that their centres would be remote even from the furthest points of the periphery. All local government services for each area would be concentrated in the hands of a single authority, thus making co-ordination easier and making local government more comprehensible to the public, who could turn to a single identifiable council house or town hall as responsible for any of the services which local government provides. Each of the units (with the exception of Smethwick, for the reasons which we have explained) would be based on one of those centres of economic and social life to which the inhabitants of the surrounding areas would naturally turn in the course of their ordinary life.

243. While there might be advantage in having a single authority administering some services over the Black Country as a whole, division of the area between a group of county boroughs does reflect broadly its social structure; and the number of county boroughs would not be so large as to prevent necessary co-operation and co-ordination on matters of common interest. We feel therefore that, while no single solution of the local government problems of the special review area can be perfect, our proposals represent the best compromise between the often conflicting requirements of effectiveness and convenience and that they would produce units which were both serviceable for the administration of local government and yet firmly grounded in the social and geographical structure of the Black Country.

Final Proposals

244. We now, therefore, make the following proposals:

- (i) The Black Country to be reorganised into five county boroughs of which the main constituent parts would be:—
 - (a) Dudley county borough, Brierley Hill urban district and most of Sedgley and part of Coseley and Amblecote urban districts.
 - (b) Smethwick county borough, Oldbury and Rowley Regis boroughs and part of Halesowen borough.
 - (c) Walsall county borough, Darlaston urban district, most of Willenhall urban district and part of Wednesbury borough.
 - (d) West Bromwich county borough, Tipton and Wednesbury boroughs and part of Coseley urban district.
 - (e) Wolverhampton county borough, Bilston borough, Wednesfield urban district and parts of Coseley, Sedgley, Tettenhall and Willenhall urban districts.
- (ii) Solihull to be made a county borough.
- (iii) Stourbridge borough and the larger part of Amblecote urban district to be amalgamated and constituted as a non-county borough in Worcestershire.
- (iv) Aldridge and Brownhills urban districts to be amalgamated and constituted as an urban district in Staffordshire.
- (v) A joint board, constituted as set out in Chapter 12, to be set up to deal with the overspill problems of Birmingham and the five Black Country county boroughs.
- (vi) A single sewage disposal board with the powers set out in Chapter 13 to be set up for each of the two main drainage basins—the Tame and the Upper Stour.
- (vii) The boundaries of the local government areas in the special review area to be as shown on the 2½" definitive maps and further defined in the schedules contained in Appendix 14.

(Ch. 1, para. 2
footnote)*Area, Population and Rateable Value
of Local Authority Areas*

	Acreage 1960	Population 1960	Rateable Value 1960/61 £
Birmingham C.B.	51,147	1,093,160	17,485,363
Dudley C.B.	4,328	63,910	816,808
Smethwick C.B.	2,496	71,110	853,055
Walsall C.B.	8,780	115,390	1,360,352
West Bromwich C.B.	7,180	93,780	1,193,123
Wolverhampton C.B.	9,126	145,160	2,381,932
Bilston B.	1,869	33,400	415,884
Halesowen B.	5,247	44,180	535,302
Oldbury B.	3,304	55,440	699,001
Rowley Regis B.	3,792	49,470	564,885
Solihull B.	20,189	92,550	1,389,738
Stourbridge B.	4,214	41,010	500,532
Sutton Coldfield B.	13,978	64,760	1,085,283
Tipton B.	2,167	39,200	457,711
Wednesbury B.	2,025	34,820	416,676
Aldridge U.D.	9,275	48,930	484,296
Amblecote U.D.	666	2,930	53,844
Brierley Hill U.D.	5,851	54,560	607,197
Brownhills U.D.	6,307	25,280	183,925
Coseley U.D.	3,167	38,070	457,906
Darlaston U.D.	1,530	22,270	260,146
Sedgley U.D.	3,823	27,430	250,942
Tettenhall U.D.	2,503	14,020	177,949
Wednesfield U.D.	2,515	31,520	330,496
Willenhall U.D.	2,834	32,280	372,118
Meriden R.D.			
Castle Bromwich P.	1,239	9,200	115,251
Kingshurst P.	924	7,500	71,307
Staffordshire			
Admin. County*	48,324	454,180	5,033,975
Warwickshire			
Admin. County*	36,330	174,010	2,661,579
Worcestershire			
Admin. County*	12,765	140,630	1,734,835
Total: (Admin. Counties)*	97,419	768,820	9,430,389
Total: Special Review Area	180,476	2,351,330	33,521,022

* Excluding those parts of the counties within the West Midlands General Review Area.

Appendix 2

(Ch. 1, para. 8)

Dwellings of Low Rateable Value—1960

Local Authority (1)	Total Number of separately rated dwellings* (2)	Rateable Value not exceeding £13		Rateable Value exceeding £13 but not exceeding £18		Dwellings of rateable value not exceeding £18 (cols. 3 and 5) as percentage of all dwellings (col. 2) (7)
		Numbers (3)	Percentage of all dwellings (4)	Numbers (5)	Percentage of all dwellings (6)	
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Birmingham . . .	311,774	44,304	14.2	48,836	15.7	29.9
Dudley . . .	18,162	3,964	21.8	3,619	19.9	41.7
Smethwick . . .	20,984	7,035	33.5	8,703	41.5	75.0
Walsall . . .	34,742	12,376	35.6	8,420	24.2	59.8
West Bromwich . . .	27,243	7,636	28.0	6,072	22.3	50.3
Wolverhampton . . .	44,777	5,230	11.7	9,566	21.4	33.1
<i>Municipal Boroughs</i>						
Bilston . . .	9,521	2,264	23.8	2,303	24.2	48.0
Halesowen . . .	13,980	3,056	21.9	2,477	17.7	39.6
Oldbury . . .	15,654	2,458	15.7	2,975	19.0	34.7
Rowley Regis . . .	15,056	4,604	30.6	3,567	23.7	54.3
Solihull . . .	28,589	738	2.6	661	2.3	4.9
Stourbridge . . .	13,148	3,340	25.4	2,958	22.5	47.9
Sutton Coldfield . . .	21,042	628	3.0	1,081	5.1	8.1
Tipton . . .	10,372	3,819	36.8	2,016	19.4	56.2
Wednesbury . . .	9,981	2,669	26.7	3,023	30.3	57.0
<i>Urban Districts</i>						
Aldridge . . .	13,826	1,266	9.2	2,018	14.6	23.8
Amblecote . . .	915	303	33.1	163	18.0	51.1
Brierley Hill . . .	16,972	4,380	25.8	4,022	23.7	49.5
Brownhills . . .	7,390	2,975	40.3	1,925	26.0	66.3
Coseley . . .	11,535	2,742	23.8	1,151	10.0	33.8
Darlaston . . .	6,349	1,763	27.8	2,131	33.5	61.3
Sedgley . . .	8,061	1,812	22.5	1,044	12.9	35.4
Tettenhall . . .	4,475	543	12.1	409	9.2	21.3
Wednesfield . . .	9,215	880	9.5	1,512	16.4	25.9
Willenhall . . .	9,263	2,587	27.9	2,186	23.6	51.5
<i>Black Country</i> . . .	321,621	77,702	24.1	72,262	22.5	46.6
<i>Birmingham and adjacent Boroughs</i> . . .	361,405	45,670	12.6	50,578	14.0	26.6
<i>West Midlands S.R.A.</i>	683,026	123,372	18.1	122,840	18.0	36.1
<i>England</i> . . .	12,686,231	2,858,736	22.5	1,856,612	14.7	37.2

Derived from information supplied by the Board of Inland Revenue.

* Excluding agricultural dwellings

(Ch. 2, para. 12)

National and Local Organisations Invited to Submit Views on the Organisation of Local Government in the Special Review Area

National Organisations

Association of British Chambers of Commerce.
Association of University Teachers.
Automobile Association.

British Association of Residential Settlements.
British Medical Association.
British Red Cross Society.
British Transport Commission.

Church Commissioners.
Commons, Open Space and Footpaths Preservation Society.
Co-operative Union Limited.
Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

Federation of British Industries.

Institute of Almoners.
Institute of Civil Engineers.
Institute of Community Studies.
Institute of Highway Engineers.
Institute of Housing.
Institute of Traffic Administration.
Institute of Transport.

Library Association.

Magistrates Association.
Multiple Shops Federation.

National and Local Government Officers Association.
National Chamber of Trade.
National Council of Family Case Work Agencies.
National Council of Women of Great Britain.
National Farmers Union.
National Federation of Housing Societies.
National Federation of Women's Institutes.
National Housing and Town Planning Council.
National League of the Blind.
National Playing Fields Association.
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
National Trust.
National Union of Manufacturers.
National Union of Public Employees.

Appendix 4

(Ch. 2, para. 12)

Local Authorities outside the S.R.A. and Organisations and Bodies who Submitted Views on the Organisation of Local Government in the Special Review Area

Local Authorities outside S.R.A.

Bromsgrove R.D.C.
Cannock R.D.C.
Lichfield R.D.C.
Seisdon R.D.C.

Parish Councils

<i>Bromsgrove R.D.</i>	<i>Meriden R.D.</i>	<i>Lichfield R.D.</i>	<i>Selsdon R.D.</i>
Cleint	Bickenhall	Burntwood	Kinver
Frankley	Coleshill	Drayton Bassett	Lower Penn
Hagley	Fillingley	Shenstone	
Hunnington	Lea Marston		
Romsley	Water Orton		
Wythall			

Other Organisations and Bodies

Aldridge Branch of National and Local Government Officers Association.
Aldridge Ratepayers Association.
Aldridge Society.
Association and Guild of Public Health Inspectors.

Bilbrook Women's Institute.
Birmingham Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.
Birmingham Conservative and Unionist Association.
Birmingham Council of Social Service.
Birmingham Executive Council—National Health Service.
Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association.
Birmingham and Midlands Federation of Residents' Associations.
Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board.
Birmingham Trades Council.
Brierley Hill Constituency Labour Party.
Brierley Hill Trades Council.
Bromsgrove Constituency Labour Party.
Bromsgrove Division Conservative Association—Wythall Joint Branch.

Cannock Division Conservative and Liberal Association.

Dudley and District Trades' Council.
Dudley National Health Service Executive Council.

Earlswood Women's Institute.

Grimes Hill Residents' Association.

Halesowen Borough Chamber of Trade.
Halesowen Trades Council.

Institute of Sewage Purification.

Lower Penn Women's Institute.

Meriden Conservative and Unionist Association.
Midland Regional Council of Federation of British Industries.
Midlands District Committee—Communist Party.
Midlands Electricity Consultative Council.
Midlands New Towns Society.

National Association of Justices' Clerks Assistants.
National Coal Board.
National Council of Social Service.
National Union of Teachers.

Oldbury and Halesowen Conservative Society.

Royal Institute of British Architects.

Shirley Residents' Association.
Shirley South Boundary Preservation Committee.
Smethwick Conservative and Unionist Association.
Smethwick Executive Council—National Health Service.
Smethwick Trades Council.
Solihull Division Conservative and Unionist Association.
South Staffordshire Council of Social Service.
South Staffordshire Waterworks Company.
Staffordshire Branch—National Farmers' Union.
Staffordshire Executive Council—National Health Service.
Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association.
Stourbridge and District Chamber of Trade.
Stourbridge and District Water Board.
Stourbridge Main Drainage Board.

Town and Country Planning Association.
Trent River Board.

University of Birmingham (Faculty of Commerce and Social Service and
Department Geography).

Walsall and District Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.
Walsall Civic Guild of Help and Citizens' Advice Bureau.
Walsall County Borough Council—Minority Group.
Walsall Executive Council—National Health Service.
Warwickshire Branch—National Farmers' Union.
Wednesbury Conservative and Unionist Association.
West Bromwich Conservative and Unionist Association.
West Bromwich Conservative and Unionist Association—Women's Advisory
Council.
West Bromwich Executive Council—National Health Service.
West Bromwich Trades Council and Labour Party.
West Bromwich Young Conservative Association.
West Midlands Gas Board.
West Midlands Gas Consultative Council.
West Midlands Group on Post-War Reconstruction and Planning.
West Midlands Non-County Boroughs Association.
West Midlands Regional Council of the Labour Party.
West Midlands Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations.
Wolverhampton, Bilston and District Trades Council.
Wolverhampton County Borough Council—Minority Group.
Wolverhampton Executive Council—National Health Service.
Wolverhampton South-West Conservative and Unionist Association.
Worcestershire Association of Parish Councils.
Worcestershire Branch—National Farmers' Union.
Wythall Ratepayers' and Residents' Association.

*Action under Section 25 of the Local Government Act, 1958**I. Applications to come out of the Special Review Area (Section 25 (1))*

1. Aldridge Urban District Council, Brownhills Urban District Council and Tettenhall Urban District Council in Staffordshire each asked for their district to be excluded from the special review area, and Warwickshire County Council asked for the exclusion of the three Warwickshire county districts—Solihull borough, Sutton Coldfield borough and Meriden rural district (parishes of Castle Bromwich and Kingshurst). Solihull Borough Council, Meriden Rural District Council and the parish councils for Castle Bromwich and Kingshurst endorsed their county council's application with applications of their own, but Sutton Coldfield Borough Council, who wished to incorporate part of Aldridge urban district into the borough, did not support the county council's application.

2. The following reasons were put forward in support of the applications:

Aldridge urban district. This district was said to be physically and historically distinct from the rest of the conurbation and to be in effect a new town in the green belt. The new population, and the administration, were thriving and the place had a different spirit from the rest of the special review area.

Brownhills urban district. This was originally a mining area and had little in common with the rest of the conurbation, from which it was separated by green belt. It was made up of four distinct communities with agricultural land in between, and its affinities were with Lichfield rural district rather than with the rest of the special review area.

Tettenhall urban district. Although Tettenhall was adjacent to the special review area, and people living there had business connexions throughout the conurbation from Wolverhampton to Birmingham, it was not part of the conurbation, and people there did not depend on places in the conurbation for their social life.

The Warwickshire districts. The County Council considered that the affiliations of these three districts were with the county and not with the conurbation. Solihull Borough Council endorsed this argument, pointing out that their area was on the extreme edge of the conurbation, and Meriden Rural District Council denied that the two parishes in their area had any links with Birmingham other than those arising from mere proximity.

3. The applications from the Staffordshire district councils were supported by the Staffordshire County Council. The county borough councils most nearly concerned (Birmingham, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton in the case of Aldridge, Walsall in the case of Brownhills, and West Bromwich and Wolverhampton in the case of Tettenhall) all opposed the applications. Birmingham County Borough Council also opposed the application made on behalf of the three Warwickshire county districts.

4. After considering the various representations for and against the exclusion of these districts, we came to the conclusion that each district should remain in the special review area while we carried out our review. This would not mean that we were bound to recommend some change in the form of local government

in these places if, after considering all the facts, we thought they were best left as they were, but it would mean that we should not be precluded from recommending change if we thought it was desirable to do so.

5. Accordingly, on 28th April, 1959, we informed each of these districts and Warwickshire County Council that we were unable to recommend to the Minister that he should make an order excluding any of these places from the special review area.

II. Areas added to the Special Review Area (Section 25 (2))

1. It became clear to us during the progress of the review that in some places it would be difficult to get sensible boundaries without taking into account certain areas in the surrounding districts where there was continuous development over the boundary of the review area.

2. On 11th November, 1959, we consulted the district and county councils concerned about the desirability of adding the following areas to the special review area:

Cannock rural district. A zone in the parish of Essington of 880 yards from any point on the outer boundary of the special review area.

Lichfield rural district. A zone in the parishes of Hammerwich and Shenstone of 880 yards from any point on the outer boundary of the special review area.

Seisdon rural district. A zone in the parishes of Himley, Wombourn, Lower Penn and Wrottesley (detached) of 880 yards from any point on the outer boundary of the special review area.

Meriden rural district. In the parish of Bickenhill, Elmdon Airport; the Coventry Road (A.45) from the Birmingham county borough boundary to the junction with Clock Lane and Bickenhill Lane; and the strip of land running 80 yards south alongside that stretch of the Coventry Road; the parts of the Warwick and Birmingham canal in the parishes of Hampton in Arden and Balsall.

Bromsgrove rural district. A zone in the parishes of Wythall, Alvechurch, and Cofton Hacket of 880 yards from any point on the outer boundary of the special review area; and that part of the parish of Hagley south of the Birmingham Road and east of Hagley Wood.

Bromsgrove urban district. A zone of 1,300 yards from any point on the outer boundary of the special review area.

3. As a result of the representations we received we withdrew the suggestions for including any part of Bromsgrove urban district in the Special Review Area, and limited the proposals for Meriden rural district to those parts of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal lying within the parishes of Hampton in Arden and Balsall.

4. Accordingly a notification was sent to the district and county councils concerned on 3rd December, 1959 that, subject to any direction we might receive from the Minister of Housing and Local Government within two months we intended to treat the parts of Cannock, Lichfield, Seisdon and Bromsgrove rural districts described in paragraph 2, and the part of Meriden rural district described in paragraph 3, as though they were parts of the special review area.

(Ch. 2, para. 17)

Staffordshire County Council's Proposals

1. Staffordshire County Council original proposals (Scheme A) provided for the amalgamation of the county districts in the Black Country into seven units, with area, population and financial position estimated as follows:

District	Estimated acreage	Estimated population		Estimated Rateable Value £	Estimated Product of 1d. rate (1959-60) £
		1958	1971		
1. <i>Brierley Hill U.D.</i> (proposed) . . .	6,539	55,010	64,500	622,561	2,486
Amblecote U.D. (as at present) . . .	666	2,950	2,900	53,520	211
Brierley Hill U.D. (as at present) . . .	5,851	52,060	61,600	569,040	2,275
Sedgley U.D. (S.W. of Mineral Railway)	19.6	—	—	1	—
Seisdon R.D. (Part of Himley Parish) .	2.4	—	—	—	—
2. <i>Bilston M.B.</i> (proposed) .	3,470.1	54,630	58,700	685,086	2,746
Bilston M.B. (as at present) . . .	1,869	33,760	32,100	409,920	1,645
Willenhall U.D. (The Portobello area)	337.6	5,090	6,500	45,055	182
Coseley U.D. (The portion lying north of the proposed Tipton- Coseley County District and the detached portion near the Walsall Canal. The portion north of Bradley Locks) . . .	1,264	15,780	20,100	230,111	919
<i>Less:</i> transfer (net) to Wolverhampton C.B. Rough Hills Housing Estate (part) . . .	0.5	—	—	—	—
3. <i>Sedgley U.D.</i> (proposed) .	4,285.8	27,000	40,670	264,430	1,057
Sedgley U.D. The whole . . .	3,746.9	25,330	37,800	246,432	985
<i>Less:</i> transfer to Brierley Hill U.D. 19.6 acres . . .	—	—	—	—	—
transfer to Seisdon R.D. 57.5 acres	—	—	—	—	—

District	Estimated acreage	Estimated	population	Estimated Rateable Value for 1959 £	Estimated Product of 1d. rate (1959-60) £
		1958	1971		
Sedgley U.D. (Contd.) Coseley U.D. (Beacon Hill area Woodsetton area Wolverhampton Road East frontage)	260	1,600	2,800	17,706	71
Seisdon R.D. (Parish of Womhourn East of Penn Golf Course) (Parish of Himley High Areal Wood area)	168	—	—	16	—
	110.9	70	70	276	1
4. Rowley Regis M.B. (as at present) . . .	3,792	49,240	54,200	551,760	2,190
5. Tipton and Coseley (proposed)	3,806	57,760	61,000	657,580	2,663
Tipton M.B. (as at present)	2,167	39,550	37,200	457,920	1,865
Coseley U.D. (The whole, less the parts transferred to the Bilston, Wednesbury and Sedgley districts)	1,639	18,210	23,800	199,660	798
6. Wednesbury and Darlaston (proposed) . . .	3,576.15	56,910	61,100	660,720	2,650
Wednesbury M.B. (as at present)	2,025	34,700	36,800	405,600	1,640
Darlaston U.D. (as at present)	1,530	22,210	24,300	255,120	1,010
Coseley U.D. (a small rectification)	2	—	—	—	—
<i>Less:</i> transfers to Walsall C.B. from:—					
Wednesbury M.B. 3.52 Darlaston U.D. 3.37	6.89	—	—	—	—
<i>Add:</i> transfer from Walsall C.B. to Wednesbury M.B.	26.04	—	—	—	—
7. Wednesfield and Willenhall (proposed) . . .	5,011.4	54,040	73,800	627,665	2,500
Wednesfield U.D. (as at present) . . .	2,515	28,280	38,300	298,560	1,182
Willenhall U.D. (less Portobello)	2,496.4	25,760	35,000	329,105	1,318

2. After our draft proposals were published Staffordshire County Council submitted revised proposals (Scheme B) for reorganising the existing county districts into six new districts, as follows:

District	Population		Rateable Value £
	1959	1963	
1. <i>Bilston and Tipton M.B.</i> . . .	79,800	79,200	961,436
Bilston M.B. (most)			
Tipton M.B. (all)			
Coseley U.D. (part)			
Dudley C.B. (small part)			
Rowley Regis M.B. (small part)			
Wednesbury M.B. (small part)			
West Bromwich C.B. (small part)			
2. <i>Brierley Hill U.D.</i> . . .	55,200	62,500	630,516
Brierley Hill U.D.			
Amblecote U.D. (part)			
3. <i>Darlaston and Wednesbury M.B.</i>	60,700	61,900	716,733
Darlaston U.D. (most)			
Wednesbury M.B. (most)			
Walsall C.B. (part)			
West Bromwich C.B. (part)			
Bilston M.B. (small part)			
Coseley U.D. (small part)			
Willenhall U.D. (small parts) .			
4. <i>Rowley Regis M.B.</i> . . .	64,300	67,100	668,320
Rowley Regis M.B. (most)			
Halesowen M.B. (part)			
Oldbury M.B. (parts) . .			
5. <i>Coseley and Sedgley U.D.</i> . . .	57,300	63,800	645,481
Coseley U.D. (most)			
Sedgley U.D. (most)			
Seisdon R.D. (part)			
6. <i>Wednesfield and Willenhall U.D.</i> .	64,400	69,800	721,928
Wednesfield U.D. (most)			
Willenhall U.D. (most)			
Darlaston U.D. (small part)			
Walsall C.B. (small part)			
Wolverhampton C.B. (small parts)			
Cannock R.D. (small part)			

District	Estimated acreage	Estimated population		Estimated Rateable Value for 1959 £	Estimated Product of 1d. rate (1959-60) £
		1958	1971		
Sedgley U.D. (Contd.) Coseley U.D. (Beacon Hill area Woodsetton area Wolverhampton Road East frontage)	260	1,600	2,800	17,706	71
Seisdon R.D. (Parish of Wombourn East of Penn Golf Course) (Parish of Himley High Arca Wood area)	168	—	—	16	—
110.9	70	70	276	1	
4. Rowley Regis M.B. (as at present) . . .	3,792	49,240	54,200	551,760	2,190
5. Tipton and Coseley (proposed)	3,806	57,760	61,000	657,580	2,663
Tipton M.B. (as at present)	2,167	39,550	37,200	457,920	1,865
Coseley U.D. (The whole, less the parts transferred to the Bilston, Wednesbury and Sedgley districts)	1,639	18,210	23,800	199,660	798
6. Wednesbury and Darlaston (proposed) . . .	3,576.15	56,910	61,100	660,720	2,650
Wednesbury M.B. (as at present)	2,025	34,700	36,800	405,600	1,640
Darlaston U.D. (as at present)	1,530	22,210	24,300	255,120	1,010
Coseley U.D. (a small rectification)	2	—	—	—	—
Less: transfers to Walsall C.B. from:—					
Wednesbury M.B. 3.52					
Darlaston U.D. 3.37	6.89	—	—	—	—
Add: transfer from Walsall C.B. to Wednesbury M.B.	26.04	—	—	—	—
7. Wednesfield and Willenhall (proposed) . . .	5,011.4	54,040	73,800	627,665	2,500
Wednesfield U.D. (as at present) . . .	2,515	28,280	38,300	298,560	1,182
Willenhall U.D. (less Portobello)	2,496.4	25,760	35,000	329,105	1,318

2. After our draft proposals were published Staffordshire County Council submitted revised proposals (Scheme B) for reorganising the existing county districts into six new districts, as follows:

District	Population		Rateable Value £
	1959	1963	
1. <i>Bilston and Tipton M.B.</i> . . .	79,800	79,200	961,436
Bilston M.B. (most)			
Tipton M.B. (all)			
Coseley U.D. (part)			
Dudley C.B. (small part)			
Rowley Regis M.B. (small part)			
Wednesbury M.B. (small part)			
West Bromwich C.B. (small part)			
2. <i>Brierley Hill U.D.</i> . . .	55,200	62,500	630,516
Brierley Hill U.D.			
Amblecote U.D. (part)			
3. <i>Darlaston and Wednesbury M.B.</i>	60,700	61,900	716,733
Darlaston U.D. (most)			
Wednesbury M.B. (most)			
Walsall C.B. (part)			
West Bromwich C.B. (part)			
Bilston M.B. (small part)			
Coseley U.D. (small part)			
Willenhall U.D. (small parts) .			
4. <i>Rowley Regis M.B.</i> . . .	64,300	67,100	668,320
Rowley Regis M.B. (most)			
Halesowen M.B. (part)			
Oldbury M.B. (parts) . . .			
5. <i>Coseley and Sedgley U.D.</i> . . .	57,300	63,800	645,481
Coseley U.D. (most)			
Sedgley U.D. (most)			
Seisdon R.D. (part)			
6. <i>Wednesfield and Willenhall U.D.</i> . . .	64,400	69,800	721,928
Wednesfield U.D. (most)			
Willenhall U.D. (most)			
Darlaston U.D. (small part)			
Walsall C.B. (small part)			
Wolverhampton C.B. (small parts)			
Cannock R.D. (small part)			

Appendix 7

(Ch. 2, para. 19)

Dudley County Borough Council's Proposals

Dudley County Borough Council proposed the division of the Black Country into seven county boroughs whose area and population they estimated as follows:

County Borough	Acreage	Population
1. Dudley (proposed)	11,893	133,270
Dudley C.B.	4,328	64,570
Sedgley U.D. (most)	3,405	21,500
Coseley U.D. (most)	2,685	31,000
Tipton M.B. (part)	483	8,300
Rowley Regis M.B. (part)	908	7,500
Brierley Hill U.D. (part)	84	400
2. Wolverhampton (proposed)	28,350	212,250
Wolverhampton C.B.	9,115	149,850
Coseley U.D. (part)	86	3,120 Est.
Sedgley U.D. (part)	425	3,150 Est.
Tettenhall U.D.	2,503	12,330
Wednesfield U.D. (part)	1,822	26,000
Seisdon R.D. (part)	13,399	17,800 Est.
3. Smethwick (proposed)	10,232	166,420
Smethwick C.B.	2,500	73,700
Halesowen M.B. (half)	2,617	14,350
Oldbury M.B.	3,295	54,770
Rowley Regis M.B. (part)	1,820	23,600
4. Stourbridge etc. (proposed)	14,039	139,250
Stourbridge M.B.	4,214	39,130
Halesowen M.B. (half)	2,630	28,600
Rowley Regis M.B. (part)	763	17,740
Amblecote U.D.	665	3,000
Brierley Hill U.D. (most)	5,767	50,780

County Borough					Acreage	Population
5. Walsall (proposed)	.	.	.	.	24,388	176,580
Walsall C.B.	.	.	.	.	8,777	114,800
Aldridge U.D.	.	.	.	.	9,284	39,100
Brownhills U.D.	.	.	.	.	6,307	22,680
6. Wednesbury etc. (proposed)	.	.	.	.	9,579	126,960
Bilston M.B. (part)	.	.	.	.	1,871	33,880
Wednesbury M.B.	.	.	.	.	1,917	32,440
Darlaston U.D.	.	.	.	.	1,535	22,140
Willenhall U.D.	.	.	.	.	2,834	31,610
Wednesfield U.D. (part)	.	.	.	.	693	2,000
Coseley U.D. (part)	.	.	.	.	394	300
West Bromwich C.B. (part)	.	.	.	.	324	4,540
Wolverhampton C.B. (part)	.	.	.	.	11	50
7. West Bromwich (proposed)	.	.	.	.	8,947*	122,460
West Bromwich C.B.	.	.	.	.	6,848	88,510
Rowley Regis M.B. (part)	.	.	.	.	302	350
Tipton M.B. (part)	.	.	.	.	1,684	31,330
Wednesbury (part)	.	.	.	.	108	2,270

* Includes 5 acres of Oldbury M.B.

Appendix 8

(Ch. 2, para. 19)

West Bromwich and Wolverhampton County Borough Councils' Proposals

West Bromwich and Wolverhampton County Borough Councils both proposed the division of the Black Country into four county boroughs whose area and population they estimated as follows:

County Borough	Acreage	Population 1958
1. <i>Wolverhampton</i> (proposed)	33,420	282,160
Wolverhampton C.B.	9,126	147,800
Bilston M.B. (Part) Est.	1,866	33,760
Wednesbury M.B. (Part) Est.	30	400
Coseley U.D. (Part) Est.	1,704	18,500
Darlaston U.D. (Part) Est.	82	1,000
Sedgley U.D. (Part) Est.	2,022	11,500
Tettenhall U.D.	2,503	12,920
Wednesfield U.D.	2,515	28,280
Willenhall U.D. (Part) Est.	212	4,500
Seisdon R.D. (Part)	13,360	23,500
2. <i>Walsall</i> (proposed)	25,660	213,997
Walsall C.B.	8,780	114,700
Wednesbury M.B. (Part) Est.	360	6,120
Aldridge U.D. (Part) Est.	9,120	28,167
Brownhills U.D. (Part) Est.	3,325	15,000
Darlaston U.D. (Part) Est.	1,453	21,168
Willenhall U.D. (Part) Est.	2,622	28,842

County Borough	Acreage	Population 1958
<i>3. Smethwick and West Bromwich (proposed)</i>	22,097	333,637
West Bromwich C.B.	7,172	93,380
Smethwick C.B.	2,496	72,690
Halesowen M.B. (Part) Est.	4,415	36,586
Oldbury M.B.	3,304	59,100
Rowley Regis M.B. (Part) Est.	1,548	20,090
Tipton M.B. (Part) Est.	1,137	20,780
Wednesbury M.B. (Part) Est.	1,635	28,100
Coseley U.D. (Part) Est.	235	3,077
Aldridge U.D. (Part) Est.	155	3,834
<i>4. Dudley (proposed)</i>	23,780	234,429
Dudley C.B.	4,328	64,400
Rowley Regis M.B. (Part) Est.	2,245	29,185
Tipton M.B. (Part) Est.	1,030	18,849
Brierley Hill U.D.	5,851	50,280
Coseley U.D. (Part) Est.	1,226	11,246
Sedgley U.D. (Part) Est.	1,808	11,390
Seisdon R.D. (Part) Est.	1,580	790
Amblecote U.D.	666	3,000
Stourbridge M.B.	4,214	38,550
Halesowen M.B. (Part) Est.	832	6,739

Appendix 9

(Ch. 3, para. 32
footnote)

Location of Area Education, Health, Welfare and Planning Offices in Staffordshire

Local Authority	Location of Area Office for			
	Education	Health	Welfare	Planning
<i>Boroughs</i>				
Bilston . .	Wednesbury	Wednesbury	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Rowley Regis . .	Dudley	Tipton	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Tipton . .	Dudley	Tipton	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Wednesbury . .	Wednesbury	Wednesbury	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
<i>Urban Districts</i>				
Aldridge . .	Cannock	Lichfield	Lichfield	Lichfield
Amblecote . .	Dudley	Brierley Hill	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Brierley Hill . .	Dudley	Brierley Hill	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Brownhills . .	Cannock	Cannock	Cannock	Lichfield
Coseley . .	Dudley	Tipton	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Darlaston . .	Wednesbury	Wednesbury	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Sedgley . .	Dudley	Brierley Hill	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Tettenhall . .	Stafford*	Brierley Hill	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Wednesfield . .	Wednesbury	Wednesbury	Wolverhampton	Sedgley
Willenhall . .	Wednesbury	Wednesbury	Wolverhampton	Sedgley

* Administered direct from County H.Q.

Representations on Draft Proposals

The following organisations, in addition to the local authorities in the review area, made representations to the Commission on the draft proposals:

Parish Councils

<i>Bromsgrove</i>	<i>Cannock</i>	<i>Lichfield</i>	<i>Meriden</i>	<i>Seisdon</i>
<i>R.D.</i>	<i>R.D.</i>	<i>R.D.</i>	<i>R.D.</i>	<i>R.D.</i>
Alvechurch	Essington	Hammerwich	Castle	Himley
Cofton		Shenstone	Bromwich	Lower Penn
Hackett				Trysall and
Hagley				Seisdon
				Wombourne
				Wrottesley

*Interested Organisations**Public Bodies*

Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board.

Halesowen District Education Committee.

Severn River Board.

Staffordshire Executive Council—National Health Service.

Stourbridge and District Water Board.

Stourbridge Main Drainage Board.

Trent River Board.

Political Parties, Professional and other associations, and Trade Unions

Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions.

Bilston Conservative and Unionist Association.

Bilston Churchill Conservative Club.

Bilston Head Teachers' Association.

Birmingham Association—National Union of Teachers.

Birmingham and District Co-operative Party.

Brierley Hill Branch—National Union of Pearl Agents.

Brierley Hill Branch—Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

Brierley Hill Division Conservative Association.

Bromsgrove Constituency Labour Party.

Cannock Division Conservative and Liberal Association.

Cradley Labour Club.

Cradley Liberal Club.

Cradley Young Liberal Association.

Edgbaston Division Conservative and Unionist Association—Four Dwellings Mixed Branch.

- Halesowen Branch—Union of Post Office Workers.
Halesowen and District Association—National Union of Teachers.
Halesowen and District Liberal Association.
Hasbury Conservative Association.
Hill and Cakemore Conservative and Unionist Club.
Hill and Cakemore Liberal Association.
- Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools.
- Kingswinford and Wall Heath Labour Club Limited.
- Lichfield and Tamworth Division Conservative and Unionist Association—
Little Aston Branch.
- Oldbury Borough Council—Conservative members.
Oldbury and Halesowen Division Conservative and Unionist Association.
Oldbury and Halesowen Division Conservative and Unionist Association
(Hill and Cakemore Women's Branch).
- Portobello Liberal Association.
- Quarry Bank Conservative and Unionist Club.
Quarry Bank Labour Club.
- Rowley Regis Association—National Union of Teachers.
- Short Heath Liberal Club.
Solihull Division Conservative and Unionist Association.
Staffordshire Local Joint Four (Joint Committee of the Four Secondary
Associations).
- Stourbridge District—National Union of Flint Glassworkers.
Sutton Coldfield and Erdington Liberal Association.
- Walsall South Conservative and Unionist Association.
Walsall South Conservative and Unionist Association—Pheasey Branch.
Walsall South Conservative and Unionist Association—Streetly Branch.
Wednesbury Conservative and Unionist Association.
Wednesbury Conservative and Unionist Association—Women's Branch and
Tea Club.
Wednesbury Divisional Liberal Association.
West Bromwich Conservative and Unionist Association.
West Midlands Regional Council of the Labour Party.
West Midlands Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations.
Willenhall Area Conservative Executive Committee.
Willenhall and District Association—National Union of Teachers.
Willenhall local Labour Party.
Willenhall Women's Liberal Association.
Worcestershire Branch—National Farmers Union.
Worcestershire County Association—National Union of Teachers.
Wordsley Conservative Club.

Chambers of Commerce, Trades Councils and Kindred Associations

Bilston and District Chamber of Trade.
Bilston Inner Wheel Club.
Bilston Round Table.
Brierley Hill and District Manufacturers' and Traders' Association.
Brierley Hill Rotary Club.
Brierley Hill Trades Council.
British Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association (Round Oak No. 1 Branch).

Halesowen Borough Chamber of Trade.
Halesowen Business and Professional Women's Club.
Halesowen Inner Wheel Club (No. 6 District).
Halesowen Ladies' Circle.
Halesowen Rotary Club.
Halesowen Round Table.
Halesowen Trades Council.

National Association of Ladies' Circles.
National Market Traders' Federation.

Rowley Regis Trades Council.

Walsall and District Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.
Wednesbury and District Trades Council.
Willenhall and District Trades Council.
Willenhall Inner Wheel Club.
Willenhall Ladies' Circle.

Voluntary Organisations

Bilston and District Youth Leaders' Council.

Halesowen Ambulance Division, St. John Ambulance Brigade.
Halesowen Cadet Ambulance Division, St. John Ambulance Brigade.
Halesowen Nursing Division, St. John Ambulance Brigade.
Halesowen Women's Voluntary Service for Civil Defence.

South Staffordshire Council of Social Service.

Willenhall Old People's Welfare Committee.
Women's Co-operative Guild, Halesowen.
Worcestershire Association for the Blind, Halesowen Branch.

Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations

Ash Green and District Ratepayers' Association.

Boldmere Residents' Association.

Castle Bromwich Residents' Association.
Cofton Common Residents' Committee.

Great Barr Petitioners.

Harborne and Quinton Community Association.
Hawbush and District Community Centre.

Lapal and District Residents' Association.

Pheassey Ward Residents' Association.

Quinton Boundary Protest Association.

Shirley Residents' Association.
Shirley South Boundary Preservation Committee.

Wall Heath Community Association.

Sports and Social Clubs

Bilston Arts Guild.

Bilston Branch—British Legion.

Bilston Branch—R.A.F. Association.

Bilston Civil Defence Welfare Club.

Bilston Darby and Joan Club.

Bilston and District Amateur Gardening Club.

Bilston and District Sons of Rest, Hickman Park Branch.

Bilston Drama Society.

Bilston—Lewis Street Old People's Rest Centre.

Bilston Old Age Pensioners' Association.

Bilston Senior Citizens' Federation.

Bilston Soroptimist Club.

Bilston Toc H.

Bilston Town Bowling Club.

Bilston Town Football Club.

Bradley Branch—British Legion.

Brierley Hill Amateur Operatic Society.

Brierley Hill Branch—British Legion.

Essington Women's Institute.

Halesowen Branch—British Legion.

Halesowen Branch Women's Section—British Legion.

Halesowen Branch—R.A.F. Association.

Halesowen Cricket Club.

Halesowen Division—Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families' Association.

Halesowen and Hagley Farmers' Club.

Halesowen (Hasbury) St. Margaret's Youth Fellowship.

Halesowen (Lady Pugh Lodge) Royal and Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

Halesowen (Shenstone) Lodge No. 219, Loyal Order of Moose.

Kingswinford Branch—British Legion.

Lower Penn "Over 60" Club.
Lower Penn Victory Hall Whist Drive Committee.
Lower Penn Women's Institute.

Quarry Bank Branch—British Legion.

Shenstone Club Limited.

Short Heath Townswomen's Guild—Executive Committee.

Willenhall Branch—British Legion.

Willenhall Branch Women's Section—British Legion.

Willenhall and District Workers' Social Club Limited.

Willenhall "41" Club.

Willenhall Musical Society.

Willenhall Women's Guild.

Miscellaneous

Aldridge Society.

Bilston Branch—National Council of Women.

Bilston Children's Holiday Camp.

Bilston Historical Society.

Bilston Girls' High School—Staff.

Bilston Girls' High School—Parents' Association.

Bilston Holy Trinity R.C. Mixed School—Headmaster.

Bilston Market Stallholders.

Bilston Saint Martin's C.E. School—Staff.

Bilston Youth Mayor and Mayoress.

Blackheath and Quinton "District Guide".

Brierley Hill Parochial Church Council.

Cradley Homer Hill County Secondary School—Staff.

Cradley Two Gates Ragged School.

Cradley Welfare Centre and Clinic—Staff Voluntary Committee.

Ettingshall Primary School—Headmistress and Staff (Infants Dept.).

Halesowen Band of Church Bellringers.

Halesowen Benefit Building Society.

Halesowen Church of England J. and I. School—Deputy Headmaster.

Halesowen College of Further Education—Governors.

Halesowen College of Further Education—Principal and Staff.

Halesowen County Modern Boys' School—Governors.

Halesowen County Modern Girls' School—Governors.

Halesowen County Modern Girls' School—Parent-Teacher Association.

Halesowen County Modern Girls' School—Pupils.

Halesowen District Girl Guides' Association.

Halesowen District Trefoil Guild—Girl Guides' Association.

Halesowen Grammar School—Staff.

Halesowen and Hasbury C.E. Schools—Managers.

Halesowen Head Teachers.

Halesowen Independence Committee.
Halesowen Magistrates.
Halesowen Methodist Church.
Halesowen Olive Hill County Primary School—Staff.
Halesowen Parochial Church Council.
Halesowen Welfare Clinic.
Hill and Cakemore (Halesowen) County Modern Boys' School—Governors.
Hill and Cakemore (Halesowen) County Modern Girls' School—Governors.
Hinley Parochial Church Council.

Lower Penn Victory Hall Management Committee.

Midlands New Towns Society.

Northfield Survey Group.

Seth Somers Trust.

University of Birmingham.

Willenhall Comprehensive Secondary School.

(Ch. 7, para. 109)

Conference at Birmingham—6th July, 1960

Authorities and Organisations Represented

Local Authorities

Staffordshire County Council.

Warwickshire County Council.

Worcestershire County Council.

Birmingham County Borough Council.

Dudley County Borough Council.

Walsall County Borough Council.

West Bromwich County Borough Council.

Halesowen Borough Council.

Rowley Regis Borough Council.

Solihull Borough Council.

Stourbridge Borough Council.

Sutton Coldfield Borough Council.

Aldridge Urban District Council.

Amblecote Urban District Council.

Brierley Hill Urban District Council.

Brownhills Urban District Council.

Cannock Urban District Council.

Bromsgrove Rural District Council.

Cannock Rural District Council.

Lichfield Rural District Council.

Meriden Rural District Council.

Stratford-on-Avon Rural District Council.

Interested Organisations

Parish Councils' Associations and Parish Councils

Warwickshire Parish Councils' Association.

Worcestershire Parish Councils' Association.

Alvechurch (Bromsgrove R.D.).

Cofton Hackett (Bromsgrove R.D.).

Bickenhill (Meriden R.D.).

Castle Bromwich (Meriden R.D.).

Other organisations

Aldridge Society.

Baldmire Residents' Association.

Midlands District Committee—Communist Party.
Midlands New Towns Society.

National Union of Manufacturers.
National Union of Teachers (Birmingham).

Pheasey Ward Residents' Association.

West Bromwich Executive Council.
West Midlands Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations.

(Ch. 7, para. 111)

Conference at Wolverhampton—11th-15th July, 1960

Authorities and Organisations Represented

Local Authorities

Staffordshire County Council.
Worcestershire County Council.
Birmingham County Borough Council.
Dudley County Borough Council.
Smethwick County Borough Council.
Walsall County Borough Council.
West Bromwich County Borough Council.
Wolverhampton County Borough Council.

Bilston Borough Council.
Halesowen Borough Council.
Oldbury Borough Council.
Rowley Regis Borough Council.
Stourbridge Borough Council.
Tipton Borough Council.
Wednesbury Borough Council.

Aldridge Urban District Council.
Amblecote Urban District Council.
Brierley Hill Urban District Council.
Brownhills Urban District Council.
Coseley Urban District Council.
Darlaston Urban District Council.
Sedgley Urban District Council.
Tettenhall Urban District Council.
Wednesfield Urban District Council.
Willenhall Urban District Council.

Bromsgrove Rural District Council.
Cannock Rural District Council.
Seisdon Rural District Council.

Interested Organisations

Parish Councils and Parish Councils' Associations

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association.
Worcestershire Parish Councils' Association.

Hagley (Bromsgrove R.D.).
Essington (Cannock R.D.).
Himley (Seisdon R.D.).

Lower Penn (Seisdon R.D.).
Wombourn (Seisdon R.D.).
Wrottesley (Seisdon R.D.).

Other organisations

Aldridge Society.

Bilston and District Chamber of Trade.
Birmingham, Tame and Rea District Drainage Board.
Brierley Hill Trades Council.

Dudley Executive Council, National Health Service.

Great Barr (Birmingham) Petitioners.

Halesowen Borough Chamber of Trade.
Halesowen Independence Committee.

Midlands District Committee, Communist Party.
Midlands New Towns Society.

National Union of Manufacturers.

National Union of Teachers.

Quinton Boundary Protest Association.

Severn River Board.

Smethwick Executive Council, National Health Service.

South Staffordshire Council of Social Service.

Stourbridge Main Drainage Board.

Trent River Board.

Upper Stour Valley Main Sewerage Board.

Walsall and District Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.
Wednesbury Divisional Liberal Association.
West Bromwich Executive Council, National Health Service.
West Midlands Regional Council of the Labour Party.
West Midlands Union of Conservative Unionist Associations.
Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce.
Wolverhampton Executive Council, National Health Service.
Worcestershire Branch, National Farmers Union.

Appendix 13

(Ch. 9, para. 145)

*Estimated Area, Population and Rateable Value in 1960 of
Proposed Local Government Areas*

<i>Proposed Authority</i>	<i>Area (acres)</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Rateable Value £</i>
County Borough of Birmingham . . .	51,500	1,090,000	17,425,000
Proposed County Borough Including— Dudley C.B. . . .	14,400	160,000	1,825,000
Smethwick C.B. . . .	10,100	185,000	2,200,000
Walsall C.B. . . .	13,200	175,000	2,040,000
West Bromwich C.B. . . .	11,600	170,000	2,085,000
Wolverhampton	17,500	250,000	3,735,000
Proposed County Borough of Solihull . .	13,600	90,000	1,380,000
Municipal Borough of Halesowen . . .	4,400	35,000	425,000
Proposed New non-County Borough amalgamating Stourbridge M.B. and Amblecote U.D.	4,600	45,000	555,000
Municipal Borough of Sutton Coldfield . .	13,800	65,000	1,110,000
Proposed New County District amalgamating Aldridge U.D. and Brownhills U.D. . .	12,700	65,000	605,000

NOTES

1. The figures in this table are only approximations, but are of sufficient accuracy to demonstrate the relative sizes of these authorities. Estimated areas have been rounded to the nearest 100 acres, populations to the nearest 5,000 persons and rateable values to the nearest £5,000. It is not claimed, however, that the figures are necessarily accurate within these margins.
2. Population figures have been derived from the Registrar General's published estimates for the existing local authorities for mid-1960. Figures of rateable value are derived from Inland Revenue returns in respect of existing local authorities for April, 1960. For both sets of figures we have had to make the best estimates we can (without being able to consult the local authorities) of the amounts involved where part only of an existing local government area is included in a proposed authority.

Appendix 14

(Ch. 9, para. 145)

Schedule Defining the Proposed Boundaries as Shown on the 2½" scale Definitive Maps

The lettered sections of the boundaries are reproduced on Map A accompanying this Report.

Those sections of the boundaries where the precise line still remains in doubt, and which therefore are covered by a special recommendation about their future modification (see Ch. 11, p. 64) are marked by an asterisk.

The proposed boundaries follow:

Map No. 1

- | | |
|------|--|
| A-B | Existing C.B. boundary. |
| B-C* | Southern boundary of College Road; south-western boundary of Chester Road (proposed improved line); centre of Court Lane; southern curtilage of No. 347 Court Lane. |
| C-D | Existing C.B. boundary. |
| D-E | Rear curtilage of dwellings in Highfield Drive. |
| E-F | Existing C.B. boundary. |
| F-G | Rear curtilage of dwellings in Knipersley Road; eastern boundary of railway; south-western boundary of Chester Road; centre of Florence Road, Broadfields Road, Birmingham Road, Harman Road and Berwood Farm Road. |
| G-H | Existing C.B. boundary.

The line between B and H is not the best boundary in this area. We had taken the line of Chester Road in our Draft Proposals. This is a major traffic artery providing a well-defined division between Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield. Protests were received from the residents who would be involved in both boroughs by this boundary change, and the two local authorities reached agreement on a general line according as nearly as possible to the existing boundary but without cutting through curtilages or leaving small sections of cul-de-sac roads shared between the two authorities. We have accepted this compromise. The asterisk in the schedule refers to that part of B-C following Chester Road; this is intended to follow the proposed improvement line. |
| H-I | Centre of new diversion of Plants Brook; western boundary of Bachelhurst Road. |
| I-J | Existing C.B. boundary. |
| J-K | Field boundary; southern boundary of Plants Brook reservoir and woodland; north-western boundary of Forge Lane; line 150 ft. south-west of Park Lane; north-western boundary of Park Lane. |
| K-L | Existing C.B. boundary except for a minor departure to coincide with the present course of the River Tame. |

- L-M Northern curtilage of dwellings at northern end of Heathland Avenue and western end of Broomdene Avenue; northern boundary of Broomdene Avenue; direct line to, and northern boundary of, Southwood Avenue; northern curtilage of dwellings at western end of Southwood Avenue and northern end of School Lane; rear curtilage of dwellings in Bradford Road to the east of School Lane; rear curtilage of cinema and dwellings in Chester Road.
- An example of the use of a rear curtilage line adjacent to a major traffic route. The adoption of the preferable centre of the road line would raise particular difficulties in the case of this Trunk Road which would then be divided between a county and a county borough. In this instance, fortunately, the development on the southern side is all fairly recent in date and the risk of the boundary becoming outdated by redevelopment in the foreseeable future is small.
- M-N Existing C.B. boundary.
- N-O North-eastern boundary of lane; northern boundary of Cooks Lane; western curtilage of dwelling in Cooks Lane; field boundaries; north boundary of lane; field boundary; rear curtilage of dwellings in Tile Cross Road.
- O-P Existing C.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the present course of Hatchford Brook.
- P-Q Centre of Coventry Road and New Coventry Road.
- In contrast to the Chester Road section referred to above, Coventry Road already lies in a county borough and will be adjacent to a second proposed county borough. The present boundary, at a fixed distance from the road, by no means coincides with the rear curtilage line which in places is very variable in depth and some undeveloped sites still remain on the southern side of the road. The centre of the road provides a preferable definable alternative allowing both boroughs to share this common asset.
- Q-R Centre of Gilbertstone Avenue; southern boundary of Wicnor Road; western curtilage of first dwelling in Wicnor Road and western boundary of Lyndon Playing Fields.
- R-S Existing C.B. boundary.
- S-T South-western curtilage of No. 17, Lowden Croft and rear curtilage of Nos. 59-1, Bosworth Road; northern boundary of Barn Lane.
- T-U Centre of Lincoln Road North, The Avenue and Lincoln Road.
- U-V Centre of Warwick Road; south-eastern boundary of playing field access to Warwick Road; eastern and southern boundary of playing field.
- V-W Centre of Gospel Lane and Redstone Farm Road.
- W-X Western boundary of lane; obliquely across Stratford Road.
- X-Y South-eastern curtilage of No. 1659, Stratford Road; south-eastern boundary of Bowling Green; rear curtilage of Nos. 65-112, Stonor Road and Nos. 54-72, Sandy Hill Road; north-western boundary of back access to Nos. 74-82, Sandy Hill Road; rear curtilage of Nos. 84-164, Sandy Hill Road; rear curtilage of Nos. 102-128, Blythford Road; north-western curtilage of Engineering Works in Newborough Road; directly to western curtilage of No. 116, Delrene Road and northern boundary of Delrene Road; rear curtilage, including back access to dwellings in Dunard Road and Geoffrey Road; northern curtilage of Nos. 80 and 89, Watwood Road and Nos. 144 and 145, Acheson Road; eastern boundary of railway.

Y-Z* Existing C.B. boundary.

This section was omitted from the Draft Proposals pending a decision on Birmingham's application to develop land in Wythall. We propose no change in the existing boundary until a decision on the green belt boundary has been reached. (See ch. 10, p. 59).

Z-AA Existing C.B. boundary.

AA-BB South-eastern boundary of Redditch Road; western boundary of Alvechurch Road; south-western boundary of Longbridge Lane.

BB-CC Field boundary; eastern and southern curtilage of school, rear curtilage of dwellings in Wootton Road; Longmeadow Grove, Windsor Close, Nimmings Close, Walters Close, Nuthurst Road, including Richard's Close and Groveley Lane; southern boundary of Groveley Lane.

CC-DD Southern boundary of Cofton Park.

DD-EE Existing C.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the northern boundary of Tessa Lane and the centre of the present course of the brook west of Trescott Road.

EE-FF* Eastern boundary of proposed motorway.

The final line of the motorway is subject to slight modification; this section is included in our general recommendation that the boundary be adjusted where necessary to coincide with the final eastern boundary of the motorway.

FF-GG Existing C.B. boundary.

GG-HH Centre of Barnsley Road; rear curtilages, including back access of dwellings and church on western side of Barnsley Road; centre of Sandon Road; western side of back access to dwellings in Willow Avenue; northern curtilage, including back access, of Nos. 167-177, Sandon Road.

Our intention is to secure a definable line which places the whole of the Bearwood shopping area in Smethwick C.B.

HH-II Existing C.B. boundary.

II-JJ Northern curtilage, including back access of dwellings in Selsey Road.

JJ-KK Existing C.B. boundary.

KK-LL Southern curtilage of development at eastern end of Laundry Road; north-eastern side of canal feeder; north-western curtilage of development on the south-western side of Shenstone Road; centre of Shenstone Road; southern boundary of Glencoe Road.

LL-MM Existing C.B. boundary.

MM-NN Northern curtilage of dwellings in Colenso Road and of No. 25, Shenstone Road; centre of Shenstone Road, Dudley Road, Dugdale Street, Abberley Street and Winsor Street; south-western curtilage of No. 311, Heath Street and dwellings in Violet Terrace.

Between KK and NN use is made of a major land use division between an extensive industrial zone already largely in Smethwick and a residential area wholly in Birmingham.

- NN-OO South-western boundary of Birmingham Canal (canal feeder); across canal and railway; western boundary of railway; eastern boundary of Wellington Street; north-western boundary of railway; western boundary of Handsworth New Road; southern boundary of railway.
- OO-PP Centre of Middlemore Road; rear curtilage of dwellings on St. Stephen's Road; eastern curtilage of football ground; obliquely across Birmingham Road; western and rear curtilage of development on the north side of Birmingham Road.
- PP-QQ Existing C.B. boundary.
- QQ-RR Centre of Park Lane.
- RR-SS Existing C.B. boundary.
- SS-TT* North-eastern boundary of railway; centre of Old Walsall Road, Walsall Road and Queslett Road.
- TT-A* Existing C.B. boundary.

Between SS and A major road improvements are proposed for both Old Walsall Road and Queslett Road; these are included in our general recommendation that the boundary be adjusted where necessary so that it will coincide with the centre of these roads when improved.

Section SS-TT contains our proposed line in the Scott Arms area. Having reached the conclusion that it is impossible to delimit realistically a local community round this road junction, and that any boundary which places the whole of the physically linked development in this area in either West Bromwich or Birmingham would not only be too drastic in scope but ignore established links with the existing county boroughs, we have restricted boundary changes to an improvement in the Birmingham/West Bromwich boundary south of the Scott Arms.

Map No. 2

- A-B Western perimeter of housing estate; footpath; northern and eastern boundary of public open space, Beacon Hill.
- B-C Existing Sedgley U.D. boundary.
- C-D Centre of Gorge Road, Hurst Road and Shaw Road.
- D-E* Centre of Birmingham Road; centre of proposed Bilston Link Road.

The precise position of the boundary along the proposed Bilston Link Road is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to follow the final centre line of this road when constructed.

- E-F Western boundary of railway.
- F-G Western boundary of railway.
- G-H Existing C.B. boundary.
- H-I Centre of New Birmingham Road.
- I-J Existing C.B. boundary.
- J-K Eastern boundary of Green Park Road; northern boundary of Larkspur Road.
- K-L Existing C.B. boundary.

L-M	Eastern curtilage of dwellings; obliquely across Oakham Road; western curtilage of dwelling.
M-N	Existing C.B. boundary.
N-O	Western boundary of railway; northern perimeter of tennis courts.
O-P	Existing C.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the Mousesweet Brook.
P-Q	Centre of Mousesweet Brook.
Q-R	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary.
R-S	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the River Stour.
S-T	Eastern boundary of railway. That part of Amblecote U.D. lying to the east of the railway forms part of a fireclay mining field extending eastwards into the adjacent parts of Brierley Hill U.D. Although much of the mining activity has now ceased, the area still presents a problem as a whole in urban redevelopment, the effective solution of which could with advantage be left to one local planning authority. The present Amblecote/Brierley Hill boundary is a county district one leaving both authorities under one administration for major services including planning. The new boundary between Worcester County and Dudley C.B. will constitute a division for all local government purposes. We propose that the whole of this mineral field should be administered by the proposed new county borough and the adoption of the railway as the boundary ensures this.
T-U	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary.
U-V	Footpath; centre of Brettell Lane.
V-W	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary.
W-X	Northern and eastern side of Dial Lane; northern perimeter of Dial Foundry; eastern boundary of Stourbridge Canal.
X-Y	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary.
Y-Z	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary.
Z-AA	Stream; south-western boundary of B 4178; north-western boundary of Envile Road; western boundary of residential area.
AA-BB	Existing Brierley Hill U.D. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the stream.
BB-CC	Western boundary of railway; northern boundary of B 4176; western boundary of road; field boundaries.

This ensures that a complex area of surface mineral workings extending over the existing boundaries of Brierley Hill U.D. and Sedgley U.D. into Seisdon R.D. shall fall within the one county borough authority.

CC-DD* North-western boundary of Sandyfields Road.

It is proposed to widen and re-align Sandyfields Road. This section is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to follow the revised boundary of this road when reconstructed.

DD-EE Western boundary of residential area; field boundaries.

EE-FF Existing Sedgley U.D. boundary.

FF-A Field boundaries to Wolverhampton Road; direct line to westernmost limit of housing estate.

Map No. 3

A-B Southern boundary of Birmingham Canal (Birmingham Level); northern boundary of railway; southern boundary of Birmingham Canal (Wolverhampton Level).

B-C Existing C.B. boundary.

C-D Eastern boundary of Kenrick Park; southern boundary of railway.

D-E Southern boundary of railway; western boundary of Handsworth New Road; north-western boundary of railway; eastern boundary of Wellington Street; western boundary of railway; across railway and canal; south-western boundary of Birmingham Canal (canal feeder).

E-F South-western curtilage of dwellings in Violet Terrace and of No. 311, Heath Street; centre of Winson Street, Ahberley Street, Duggdale Street, Dudley Road and Shenstone Road; northern curtilage of No. 25, Shenstone Road and of dwellings in Colenso Road.

F-G Existing C.B. boundary.

G-H Southern boundary of Glencoe Road; centre of Shenstone Road; north-western curtilage of development on the south-western side of Shenstone Road; north-eastern side of canal feeder; southern curtilage of development at eastern end of Laundry Road.

For comments on boundary between E and H, see Map No. 1, Sections KK-NN above.

H-I Existing C.B. boundary.

I-J Northern curtilage, including back access of dwellings in Selsey Road.

J-K Existing C.B. boundary.

K-L Northern curtilage, including back access of Nos. 177-167, Sandon Road; western side of back access to dwellings in Willow Avenue; centre of Sandon Road; rear curtilages, including back access, of Church and dwellings on western side of Barnsley Road; centre of Barnsley Road.

For comments on boundary between K and L, see Map No. 1, Sections HH-II above.

L-M Existing C.B. and Oldbury M.B. boundaries.

M-N Existing Oldbury M.B. boundary.

N-O Existing Oldbury M.B. boundary.

O-P Centre of Halesowen Road and Mucklow Hill; eastern and northern boundaries of lane; eastern boundary of Dudley Canal; eastern curtilage of Coombe Wood Tube Works; eastern boundary of road; centre of Gorsty Hill Road.

Use is made here of a main road and a major division between residential and industrial land uses to separate Blackheath from the remainder of Halesowen M.B.

P-Q	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary.
Q-R	Centre of Station Road and Lodgefield Road.
R-S	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary.
S-T	North-western boundary of lane; north-western curtilage of garage; field boundaries.
T-U	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary, except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the River Stour.
U-V	Centre of Mousesweet Brook.
V-W	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary, except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the Mousesweet Brook.
W-X	Northern boundary of tennis courts; western boundary of railway.
X-Y	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary.
Y-Z	Western curtilage of dwelling; obliquely across Oakham Road; eastern curtilage of dwellings.
Z-AA	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary.
AA-BB	Northern boundary of Larkspur Road; eastern boundary of Green Park Road.
BB-CC	Existing Rowley Regis M.B. boundary.
CC-A	Centre of Wolverhampton Road; eastern curtilage of dwellings; northern boundary of Dudley Road; eastern boundary of road; eastern boundary of canal (Netherton Tunnel Branch).

The existing boundary between Tipton M.B. and Rowley Regis M.B. in this area not only cuts through an extensive industrial zone but also through individual buildings. The only definable line avoiding the industrial zone altogether would be to the west along the A. 461. This would place the residential land on its eastern side in the new county borough including Smethwick C.B. but remote from the residential area in this borough north of the Wolverhampton Road. The line now proposed makes use of a major land use division along the greater part of its length and cuts through the industrial zone only along the line of the canal.

Map No. 4

A-B	Eastern boundary of Stafford Road; northern boundary of disused canal.
B-C	Northern and western boundaries of canal.
C-D	Existing C.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the stream.
D-E	Centre of stream; eastern boundary of Cartbridge Lane; southern boundary of railway.

Although we should normally prefer to include in the county borough the land held by Walsall for a school and playing fields north of the railway and at present in Aldridge U.D., this would bring the county borough boundary up against the urban development in Rushall, and the only access to the school site would be through intervening land in the county district. The railway provides a well-defined alternative boundary coinciding with the natural break in development between Walsall and Aldridge.

- E-F Existing C.B. boundary.
- F-G South-western boundary of Cuckoo's Nook; footpath.
Here, in contrast to section D-E, the boundary of the county borough can be extended to include the remainder of the land now in Aldridge which is held by Walsall for a proposed cemetery. No boundary problem arises; the proposed extension of the county borough is separated from development in Aldridge by green belt and linked to Walsall by urban development.
- G-H* Southern boundary of Sutton Road; eastern boundary of Skip Lane; north-eastern curtilage of dwelling.
It is probable that Skip Lane will be realigned: this stretch is covered by our general recommendation regarding future boundary modification
- H-I Existing C.B. boundary.
- I-J Field boundaries; north-western boundary of Chapel Lane.
- J-K Rear curtilage of dwellings in Coronation Road and Merrions Close; obliquely across Birmingham Road; field boundaries.
- K-L Existing C.B. boundary.
- L-M* Western boundary of Cherry Tree Avenue; centre of Greenside Way; western boundary of proposed diversion of Walsall Road; southern boundary of proposed motorway.
Use is made here of the proposed new line of Walsall Road and of the proposed motorway. These stretches of the boundary are covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be adjusted where necessary to coincide with the boundaries of these roads on construction.
- M-N Existing C.B. boundary.
- N-O South-western boundary of railway.
- O-P River Tame; old course of River Tame; northern boundary of sports ground; eastern boundary of Park Lane; centre of Franchise Street; eastern boundary of Old Park Road.
- P-Q* Centre of proposed Woden Road and Woden Road West; centre of road; eastern boundary of Walsall Canal; northern boundary of canal.
It is particularly difficult to find a good line separating Darlaston from Wednesbury. Although the present boundary follows a major road for most of its length, the residential communities on either side are both close to the central area of Darlaston which extends down to this southern boundary and both enjoy equally direct access to Walsall via Darlaston Road: that part of this residential zone immediately south of the present boundary in Wednesbury, except near Park Lane, is also cut off by other land uses from the main residential districts of Wednesbury. The boundary proposed makes use of these major land use divisions and accords closely with the line suggested by both Wolverhampton and West Bromwich in their own county borough proposals (see Fig. 2, p. 7). In so far as the final line adopted for the new Woden Road and Woden Road West may be still liable to modification, this stretch of the boundary (P-Q) is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to coincide with the centre of these roads when constructed.
- Q-R North-eastern boundary of railway; south-eastern curtilage of industrial premises to the north-west of Lodge Road and Harrowby Road; directly across Harrowby Road and Great Bridge Road; southern and eastern curtilage of industrial premises south of A.41; eastern and northern curtilage of industrial premises north of A.41.

- R-S Existing Darlaston U.D. boundary.
- S-T* Eastern boundary of proposed Bilston Link Road.
- So far as sections Q to T are concerned, at first sight the Walsall Canal appears to offer the more effective boundary line separating the two proposed county boroughs in this area. The alternative boundary now proposed arises from the desire to maintain Darlaston's new housing estate at Moxley in the same authority as Darlaston and thus to include all the neighbouring residential land in the Moxley area in the one authority.
- Between S and T the precise position of the boundary depends on the line finally adopted for the proposed Bilston Link Road; this section is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to coincide with the boundary of this road when constructed.
- T-U Existing Willenhall U.D. boundary.
- U-V* Centre of Bilston Road; centre of proposed Willenhall bypass; southern boundary of railway.
- V-W* Eastern boundary of proposed road; centre of Perry Hall Road.
- For the greater part of the stretch between U and W the boundary is determined by the line of proposed roads. These sections are covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to coincide with the boundary of the roads when constructed.
- W-X Existing Willenhall U.D. boundary.
- X-Y Line 220 ft. south of Upper Sneyd Road.
- Y-Z North-western boundary of Kitchen Lane; northern boundary of Upper Sneyd Road; eastern boundary of Bursnips Road; line 220 ft. north of Sneyd Lane; western boundary of railway.
- Z-AA* South-western boundary of proposed motorway.
- This section is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to coincide with the boundary of the motorway when constructed.
- AA-BB Existing Willenhall U.D. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with field boundaries.
- BB-CC Western and northern boundary of disused Essington Canal; eastern boundary of railway.
- CC-A Existing C.B. boundary.
- Map No. 5
- A-B South-western boundary of railway.
- B-C Existing C.B. boundary.
- C-D* Southern boundary of proposed motorway; western boundary of proposed diversion of Walsall Road; centre of Greenside Way; western boundary of Cherry Tree Avenue.

For comments on this section see Map No. 4, Section L-M, above.

- D-E Existing C.B. boundary.
- E-F Field boundaries, obliquely across Birmingham Road; rear curtilage of dwellings in Merriots Close and Coronation Road.
- F-G* South-eastern boundary of Chapel Lane; eastern boundary of Birmingham Road; north-eastern boundary of proposed motorway.
- In the southern part of this section, the boundary follows the proposed motorway: this stretch is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to coincide with the road when constructed.
- G-H* Centre of Queslett Road, Walsall Road and Old Walsall Road; north-eastern boundary of railway.
- For comments on this section, see Map No. 1, Section SS-TT, above.
- H-I Existing C.B. boundary.
- I-J Centre of Park Lane.
- J-K Existing C.B. boundary.
- K-L Rear and western curtilage of development on the north side of Birmingham Road; obliquely across Birmingham Road; eastern curtilage of football ground; rear curtilage of dwellings on St. Stephen's Road; centre of Middlemore Road.
- L-M Southern boundary of railway; eastern boundary of Kenrick Park.
- M-N Existing C.B. boundary
- N-O Southern boundary of Birmingham Canal (Wolverhampton level); northern boundary of railway; southern boundary of Birmingham Canal (Birmingham level).
- O-P Eastern boundary of canal (Netherton Tunnel Branch); eastern boundary c road; northern boundary of Dudley Road; eastern curtilage of dwellings; centr. of Wolverhampton Road.
- For comments on this section see Map No. 3, Section CC-A, above.
- P-Q Centre of New Birmingham Road.
- Q-R Existing Tipton M.B. boundary.
- R-S Western boundary of railway.
- S-T Centre of Brierley Lane and Batmashill Road; eastern and northern boundary of canals.
- T-U* Northern boundary of canal; eastern boundary of Walsall Canal; centre of road; centre of proposed Woden Road West and Woden Road.
- U-A Eastern boundary of Old Park Road; centre of Franchise Street; eastern boundary of Park Lane; northern boundary of sports ground; existing Wednesbury M.B. boundary; River Tame.
- For comments on Sections T to A see Map No. 4, Sections O to Q, above.

Map No. 6

- A-B Existing C.B. boundary.
- B-C Stream.
- C-D Existing Wednesfield U.D. boundary.
- D-E Line 220 ft. east of Wood Hayes Road and Wood End Road; northern curtilage of dwelling; eastern boundary of access to Prestwood Farm; northern and eastern curtilage of police station.
- E-F Northern boundary of Linthouse Lane; western and northern boundary of Kitchen Lane; line 220 ft. south of Upper Sneyd Road.
- F-G Line 220 ft. south of Upper Sneyd Road.
- G-H Existing Wednesfield U.D. boundary.
- H-I* Centre of Perry Hall Road; eastern boundary of proposed road.
- I-J* Southern boundary of railway; centre of proposed Willenhall Bypass; centre of Bilston Road.
- For comments on sections H to J, see Map No. 4, sections U to W above.
- J-K Existing Bilston M.B. boundary.
- K-L* Eastern boundary of proposed Bilston Link Road.
- L-M Existing Bilston M.B. boundary.
- M-N Northern and eastern curtilage of industrial premises north of A 41; eastern and southern curtilage of industrial premises, south of A 41; directly across Great Bridge Road and Harrowby Road; south-eastern curtilage of industrial premises to the north-west of Harrowby Road and Lodge Road; north-eastern boundary of railway.
- For comments on sections K to N, see under Map No. 4, sections Q to T above.
- N-O Northern and eastern boundary of canals; centre of Batmanghill Road and Brerley Lane.
- O-P Western boundary of railway.
- P-Q* Centre of proposed Bilston Link Road; centre of Birmingham Road.
- For comments on sections P-Q, see Map No. 2, section D-E above.
- Q-R Centre of Shaw Road, Hurst Road and Gorge Road.
- R-S Existing Coseley U.D. boundary.
- S-T Eastern and northern boundary of public open space, Beacon Hill; footpath; western perimeter of housing estate.
- T-U Westernmost limit of housing estate direct to field boundary on western side of Wolverhampton Road; field boundaries.
- U-V Existing Sedgley U.D. boundary.
- V-W Field boundary.

- W-X Existing C.B. boundary.
- X-Y Southern boundary of road; field boundary; eastern curtilage of dwellings; southern boundary of lane.
- Y-Z Western curtilage of dwellings; southern boundary of lane; field boundary.
- Z-AA Existing C.B. boundary.
- AA-BB Field boundaries.
- BB-CC Existing C.B. boundary.
- CC-DD Eastern and southern boundary of woodland; eastern boundary of Stourbridge Road; field boundaries; rear curtilage of dwellings in Showell Lane; southern boundary of Showell Lane; rear curtilage of dwellings east and north-east of Showell Bank; northern boundary of Springhill Road.
- DD-EE Existing C.B. boundary.
- EE-FF Field boundaries; eastern boundary of road.
The proposed boundary in this area is designed to include within the county borough land used by Wolverhampton for allotments, secondary school and sewage sludge disposal.
- FF-GG Southern boundary of Langley Road; western and northern curtilage of development; field boundaries; north-western boundary of railway; field boundaries; western boundary of road; southern boundary of residential land; line 220 ft. west of road.
- GG-HH Existing Tettenhall U.D. boundary.
- HH-II Field boundaries; northern boundary of Bridgnorth Road; field boundaries; southern and eastern boundary of Wightwick Hall; southern and western curtilage of dwellings; existing Tettenhall U.D. boundary.
- II-JJ Northern boundary of road; western and northern boundary of Perton Grove; field boundaries.
- JJ-KK Western boundary of Mill Lane; southern and western curtilage of dwellings in Mill Lane to the north of Wrottesley Road.
- KK-LL Northern boundary of road; field boundary west of The Grange; southern boundary of road; field boundary; obliquely across A 41; field boundary; western boundary of Wergs Hill Road.
- LL-MM Existing Tettenhall U.D. boundary.
- MM-NN Western boundary of Keepers Lane; northern and eastern curtilage of dwellings.
- NN-OO Existing Tettenhall U.D. boundary.
- OO-PP North-western boundary of Coppice Lane; field boundaries including direct line between two field boundaries; south-western boundary of Lane Green Road; south-eastern boundary of secondary school site; south-western boundary of railway.
Here the proposed boundary accords closely with the major line of division between urban land uses and agricultural land south of Lane Green Road and to the north takes advantage of the one break in the built-up area between Wolverhampton and Codsall afforded by the secondary school site and adjacent open space.

PP-QQ Centre of stream; western boundary of Pendeford Road; northern boundary of Wobaston Road.

The two roads in this section produce a definable boundary placing the whole of the airfield and associated land held by Wolverhampton and the aircraft factory in the proposed county borough.

QQ-RR Western side of Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

RR-A Existing C.B. boundary.

Map No. 7

A-B Centre of New Coventry Road and Coventry Road.

For comments on this section see Map No. 1, section P-Q above.

B-C Existing Birmingham C.B. boundary; southern boundary of Coventry Road; field boundary.

C-D Existing M.B. boundary.

D-E Field boundaries.

E-F Existing M.B. boundary except for two departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of Low Brook.

F-G Northern and eastern boundary of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal.

G-H Centre of stream.

It is not possible to draw a boundary on this side of Solihull which clearly separates urban development from rural countryside; the one merges into the other. The line adopted has the advantage of including within the proposed county borough most of the residential pockets south of Dorridge whilst coinciding with a stream for the most part occupying a marked valley.

H-I Field boundaries; line 220 ft. south-east of Four Ashes Road; field boundary; western boundary of A.34.

The boundary in the northern part of this section has been designed so as to leave the whole of the proposed Hockley Heath by-pass in the county.

I-J Line 220 ft. west of A.34; south-western curtilages of development on A.34 north of Greynold's Lane; line 220 ft. west of A.34.

J-K* Line 220 ft. south-west of proposed Trunk Road.

K-L* Line 220 ft. south-west of proposed Trunk Road; western boundary of Aqueduct Road; centre of stream.

The boundary between J and L is for most of its length related to the position of the proposed Trunk Road. This stretch is covered by our general recommendation that the boundary be modified where necessary to maintain the proposed relationship with the road when constructed.

L-M* Existing M.B. boundary.

Between K and M the boundary had been left undetermined at Draft Proposal Stage pending a decision on Birmingham's application to develop land at Wythall. We have now proposed a line from K to the existing boundary at L but we propose no change in the existing boundary L-M until a decision on the green belt boundary has been reached. (See Ch. 10, para. 178).

- M-N Eastern boundary of railway; northern curtilage of Nos. 145 and 144, Acheson Road and of No. 89 and No. 80, Watwood Road; rear curtilage, including back access to dwellings in Geoffrey Road and Dunard Road; northern boundary of Delrene Road and western curtilage of No. 116, Delrene Road; directly to north-western curtilage of Engineering Works in Newborough Road; rear curtilage of Nos. 128-102, Blythsford Road; rear curtilage of Nos. 164-84, Sandy Hill Road; north-western boundary of back access to Nos. 82-74, Sandy Hill Road; rear curtilage of Nos. 72-54, Sandy Hill Road and Nos. 112-76, Stonor Road; south-eastern boundary of Bowling Green; south-eastern curtilage of No. 1659, Stratford Road.
- N-O Obliquely across Stratford Road; western boundary of lane.
- O-P Centre of Redstone Farm Road and Gospel Lane.
- P-Q Southern and eastern boundary of playing field; south-eastern boundary of playing field access to Warwick Road; centre of Warwick Road.
- Q-R Centre of Lincoln Road, The Avenue and Lincoln Road North.
- R-S Northern boundary of Barn Lane; rear curtilage of Nos. 1-59, Bosworth Road and south-western curtilage of No. 17, Lowden Croft.
- S-T Existing M.B. boundary.
- T-A Western boundary of Lyndon Playing Fields; western curtilage of first dwelling in Wichenor Road; southern boundary of Wichenor Road; centre of Gilbertstone Avenue.

Map No. 8

- A-B Centre of Gorsty Hill Road; eastern boundary of road; eastern curtilage of Coombeswood Tube Works; eastern boundary of Dudley Canal; northern and eastern boundaries of lane; centre of Mucklow Hill and Halesowen Road.
 For comments on this section, see Map No. 3, section O-P.
- B-C Existing M.B. boundary.
- C-D Existing Birmingham C.B. boundary.
- D-E* Eastern boundary of proposed Motorway.
 For comments on this section, see Map No. 1, section EE-FF.
- E-F Existing M.B. boundary.
- F-G Northern side of Bogs Wood.
- G-H Existing M.B. boundary.
- H-I Field boundaries.
- I-J Existing M.B. boundary.
- J-K* Existing M.B. boundary.

The northern part of the existing boundary in this section extending southwards from the River Stour to Waste Bank runs through part of a fireclay mining field and coincides neither with land use divisions nor development curtilages. The major change in this boundary contained in our Draft Proposals is no longer justified now that we propose to leave Halesowen M.B. within Worcestershire so that this will remain a county district, and not a county, boundary. It is not possible at this stage, however, to propose the necessary local improvements to the existing boundary pending detailed plans of proposed redevelopment in this area. This stretch of the boundary is covered by our general recommendation that modifications be made once the revised pattern of development has been determined.

- K-L Existing M.B. boundary.
- L-M Existing M.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the River Stour.
- M-N Field boundaries; north-western curtilage of garage; north-western boundary of lane.
- N-O Existing M.B. boundary.
- O-P Centre of Lodgefield Road and Station Road.
- P-A Existing M.B. boundary.

Map No. 9

- A-B Centre of Brettell Lane; footpath.
- B-C Existing U.D. boundary.
- C-D Eastern boundary of railway.

For comments on this section, see Map No. 2, section S-T above.

- D-E Existing M.B. boundary except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the River Stour.

- E-F* Existing M.B. boundary.

For comments on this section, see Map No. 8, section J-K above.

- F-G Existing M.B. boundary.
- G-H Eastern boundary of Hagley Road; curtilage of development; field boundaries.
- H-I Existing M.B. boundary.
- I-J Existing M.B. and U.D. boundary.
- J-K Eastern boundary of Stourbridge Canal; northern perimeter of Dial Foundry; eastern and northern side of Dial Lane.
- K-A Existing U.D. boundary.

Map No. 10

- A-B Southern boundary of Camp Road; eastern boundary of Weeford Road.

Urban development in the borough does not extend out to this road which, whilst forming a definable boundary in this area, has therefore been placed in Lichfield R.D.

- B-C Existing M.B. boundary.
- C-D Eastern boundary of road.
- D-E Existing M.B. boundary except for a minor departure to coincide with the boundary of the sewage works (southern side of lane).

E-F	Eastern boundary of woodland; southern boundary of Water Orton Lane.
F-G	Existing M.B. boundary.
G-H	Rear curtilage of dwellings in Water Orton Lane and Park Lane; directly to, and southern boundary of, Park Lane.
H-I	North-western boundary of Park Lane; line 150 ft. south-west of Park Lane; north-western boundary of Forge Lane; southern boundary of woodland and Plants Brook reservoir; field boundary.
I-J	Existing M.B. boundary.
J-K	Western boundary of Bachelhurst Road; new diversion of Plants Brook.
K-L	Existing M.B. boundary.
L-M	Centre of Berwood Farm Road, Harman Road, Birmingham Road, Broadfields Road and Florence Road; south-western boundary of Chester Road; eastern boundary of railway; rear curtilage of dwellings in Knipersley Road.
M-N	Existing M.B. boundary.
N-O	Rear curtilage of dwellings in Highfield Drive.
O-P	Existing M.B. boundary.
P-Q*	Southern curtilage of No. 347, Court Lane; centre of Court Lane; south-western boundary of Chester Road (proposed improved line); southern boundary of College Road.

For comments on sections K to Q, see Map No. 1, sections B to H above.

Q-R	Existing M.B. boundary.
R-S*	Existing M.B. boundary.
	In view of the proposed improvements to Queslett Road, this stretch of the boundary is covered by our general recommendation regarding future boundary modifications, the boundary to coincide with the centre of the improved Queslett Road.
S-T	Centre of road; western boundary of Sutton Park.
	Residential development, now in depth, being restricted to the western side of Thornhill Road, this road is placed wholly with that development in the proposed new authority amalgamating Aldridge U.D. and Brownhills U.D.
T-U	Western boundary of Sutton Park; centre of Rosemary Hill Road.
	Residential development occurring in depth on either side of Rosemary Hill Road, the boundary is placed along the centre of this road.
U-A	Existing M.B. boundary.
	Here, development on the road is largely on the Lichfield R.D. side and urban development in the borough is not intended to extend north of Hill Hook. In consequence the road between U and A (Blake Street and Little Hay Road) is left wholly in the rural district and compares with our proposed boundary between A and B (Camp Road).

- A-B Existing U.D. boundary.
- B-C Existing Hammerwich Parish boundary; eastern boundary of railway.
- The boundary between A and the railway in section B-C could probably be improved. A preferable boundary in this section would have continued from A along the railway thus placing the whole of Chasewater in the new authority. But this was not foreseen at the time when we extended the special review area under section 25(1) of the 1958 Act.
- C-D Western boundary of Hanney Hay Road; southern boundary of Lichfield Road.
- Between B and D our purpose has been to draw a definable line which includes the extension of urban development across the existing boundary into Lichfield R.D.
- D-E Existing U.D. boundary.
- E-F North-eastern boundary of lane.
- F-G Existing U.D. boundary.
- G-H North-western boundary of Lichfield Road (A 461); rear curtilage of dwellings on south-eastern side of Lichfield Road.
- H-I Eastern boundary of Chester Road and Mill Lane.
- The Chester Road forms a well-defined boundary. With little development fronting on to this road which runs through green belt, and the road being within the proposed new authority both to the north and south, the boundary has been drawn along its eastern boundary.
- I-J Existing U.D. boundary.
- J-K Centre of stream; western side of railway.
- K-L Western boundary of Sutton Park; centre of road.
- For comments on this section, see Map No. 10, section S-T above.
- L-M* Existing U.D. boundary.
For comments on this section, see Map No. 10, section R-S above.
- M-N* Existing U.D. boundary.
For comments on this section, see Map No. 1, section TT-A above.
- N-O* North-eastern boundary of proposed motorway; eastern boundary of Birmingham Road; south-eastern boundary of Chapel Lane.
For comments on this section, see Map No. 5, section F-G above.
- O-P North-western boundary of Chapel Lane; field boundaries.
- P-Q Existing U.D. boundary.
- Q-R* North-eastern curtilage of dwelling; eastern boundary of Skip Lane; southern boundary of Sutton Road.
For comments on this section, see Map No. 4, section G-H above.
- R-S Footpath; south-eastern boundary of Cuckoo's Nook.
For comments on this section, see Map No. 4, section F-G above.

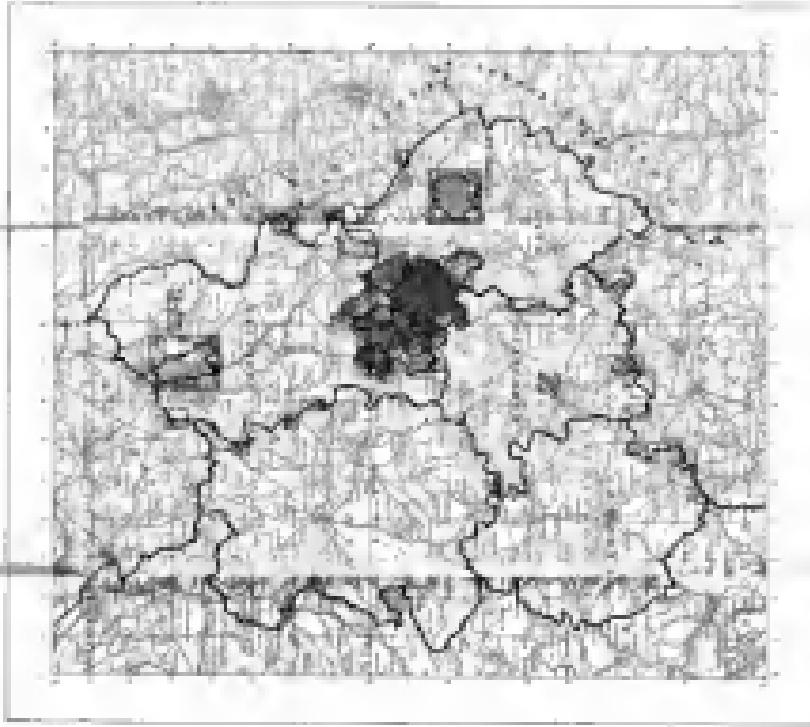
- S-T Existing U.D. boundary.
- T-U Southern boundary of railway; eastern boundary of Cartbridge Lane; centre of stream.
- For comments on this section, see Map No. 4, section D-E above.
- U-V Existing U.D. boundary, except for minor departures to coincide with the centre of the present course of the stream.
- V-W Western and northern boundary of canal.
- W-X Eastern boundary of Fishley Lane.
- X-Y Existing U.D. boundary.
- Y-Z Northern boundary of Pelsall Wood Common; field boundaries; southern boundary of Engine Lane.
- Z-A Eastern boundary of railway; field boundary; eastern boundary of Brownhills Road; eastern boundary of railway.



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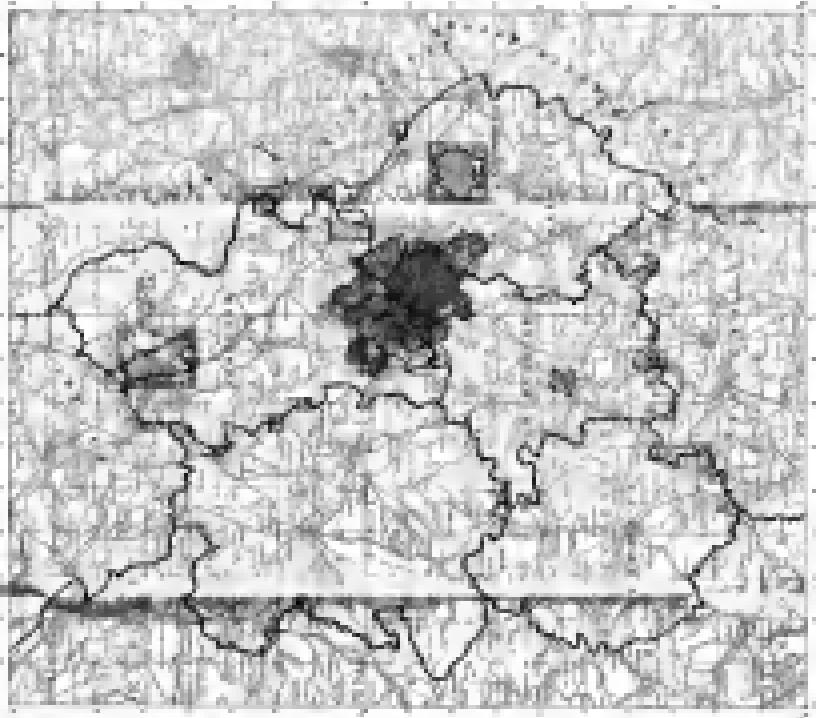
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100	100	3.7	0.6
80	80	3.7	0.6
60	60	3.7	0.6
40	40	3.7	0.6
20	20	3.7	0.6
0	0	3.7	0.6

the first time in the history of the world, the people of the United States have been called upon to decide whether they will submit to the law of force, or the law of the Constitution. We consider the question to be, whether the Southern Slaveholding States have a right to secede from the Union; and if so, whether the Federal Government has a right to interfere with their slaves? The former question is the only one which we have to consider at present. The second question is of great importance, but it is not now before us.

Ergonomics in Design

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